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MAN'S IDEAS ABOUT THE UNIVERSE[1]

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I

WHEN man emerged from the millions of years of evolution in the Early and Late Stone-ages he had shed his ape-like characters; he was erect, large-brained, and he had become an agriculturist and a craftsman. He must have wondered—as we wonder still—at the sun, the moon and the stars, the land and the sea, the thunder and lightning, at his own birth, and growth and death. Endowed with intuition and reason, and with curiosity, he must have concluded—as we conclude—that all this did not explain itself. There must have existed, and still exist, Something Else, that he could not perceive and did not understand. Endowed also with imagination, he peopled the earth and the sky with spirits—gods and demigods, ghosts and fairies, demons and angels. There followed beliefs in direct communication from this other world, through dream or trance, ecstasy or intuition; sometimes an individual assurance of personal contact and inspiration. So religion came to be: in the form, first of animism, then of mythology, finally of monotheism.

Later came philosophers, applying the power of reason to investigate the processes of Nature and the phenomena of life and mind. They inquired, searched, discussed, generalized. They let thought loose in speculation; they arranged it into induction and deduction;

[1] This lecture was first delivered, somewhat expanded, as the Roscoe Lecture for 1952, under the auspices of the Liverpool Literary and Philosophical Society, at the Royal Institution, Liverpool, July 3rd, 1952. It was repeated in its present form to the members of the Royal Institute of Philosophy, at the Institute of Education of London University, on February 26th, 1953.

they formalized it in logic. Then some among the philosophers specialized in the study of Nature, and became what we now call scientists. In modern times science made startling discoveries and produced marvellous inventions; it outgrew philosophy, and in the end separated itself altogether. Leading its own life, absorbed in its own work, developing its own technologies, it gives to the civilization of to-day its distinctive character.

So we find, when we investigate man's ideas about the universe, that they have been the product of those three factors. First, they began in an atmosphere intuitive, mystical, mythical, imaginative: out of it came, after long ages, the great religions that we have. Second, philosophy brought to bear that powerful instrument of the intellect, the faculty of reason. Thirdly came science; firmly based on man's daily experience of his own environment and his perception of the cosmos beyond; supplementing his bodily senses by the help of appliances of exquisite ingenuity; expanding vastly his knowledge and ever enlarging his powers.

Each of the three—Religion, Philosophy, Science—has presented its own picture of the world. It is not surprising that they have often differed from one another. They differ still. So that, when we try to survey as a whole the situation, intellectual and moral, in which we now find ourselves, we see at once, as its most obvious characteristic, that it is in a state of confusion. Religion will teach one thing, philosophy sometimes another, and science perhaps something different again. Within each of the three, are faiths and sects and schools at variance with one another. And we are so accustomed to this that we look upon it as natural: we think it would be foolish to suppose that things have ever been, or ever will be, otherwise. I believe that when we set out to seek the causes of our present troubles in the sphere of politics, or economics, or social behaviour, we shall find, if we probe deep enough, that they lie here and nowhere else—in this chronic confusion, and in this complacent, or even cynical, acceptance of it as inevitable. The blunt fact is that the leaders of thought—philosophers, scientists, and men of religion—have failed us: they fail to give to the age the understanding of things as they are, and the guidance towards things as they should be, for which it craves.

II

This is not to suggest that nothing has ever been solved, that there has been no clarification of ideas. On the contrary—let us compare, for example, the more ancient religions, in the forms that they retain, essentially unchanged, in Asia, with the ideas on religion current in the Western world to-day, and we shall realize how profound has been the effect of the impact of philosophy and science. Popular

Hinduism, with its hundreds of symbolic, fictional gods; Buddhism, looking for a sanction for morality in the fantasy of reincarnation and transmigration of souls—of bad men into animals and of good men into imaginary higher beings; Islam, with its fatalistic doctrine of submission—How are we to strive against events, since events are the handiwork of God?—none of these have gained, or are likely to gain, the assent of the Western mind. Or we may take examples of change and progress from the realm of science itself. No one believes now that eclipses of the sun and the moon are portents divinely sent to warn and guide human beings: or else are the work, as they believed in China and India, of an invisible enemy—some dragon or demon—who was to be driven off by the beating of gongs and the firing of crackers. No one now thinks, as men thought for centuries, that the sun, moon, planets and stars move in spheres round the earth, each one propelled by an attendant spirit. Few now accept, as almost everyone accepted till a hundred years ago, that the different kinds of plants and animals were the product of sudden and separate acts of creation. (Although, indeed, it is only a few years since that the Legislature of the State of Tennessee passed a law forbidding grants of public money to any school or university which taught the principles of evolution.)

When two people have been discussing some issue and agree at the end still to differ, they often break off with the amiable formula, "After all, there are two sides to every question." There are two sides to every question for the simple reason, that when one side has been shown to be wrong and its advocates have been silenced, the matter is settled and ceases to be a question. On any of the issues I have quoted as examples, which all were once, and some in the East still are, very much alive and strenuously argued, there are not two sides to-day among the Western peoples.

The fact remains, of course, that many old problems in religion and philosophy—among them some of the oldest—are still unsolved. And beneath the solved problems, fresh ones appear. "Under every deep," says Emerson, "a new deep opens." But that need be no deterrent to persistent inquiry. On the contrary, the fact that some have been settled is an encouragement to attack old ones that remain and new ones that appear, in an attempt to find a way out of our present confusions. And the deeper they lie the better it is; for only if we can get our intellectual and moral foundations right can we hope to build securely the structure of the future.

On this occasion, however, I do not propose to touch upon matters which belong jointly to philosophy and to religion. I ventured to do that in an address, with the title "Decline or Revival of Religion," which I gave to the Institute in October 1948, afterwards included in a short volume of lectures and broadcasts. To-day I turn to some

matters, also controversial, that are the joint concern of philosophy and science.

The revolutionary discovery of J. J. Thomson and Rutherford, some fifty years ago, that the atom has a structure, consisting of particles of various kinds in exceedingly rapid motion, gave rise to intense activity among theoretical and experimental physicists all over the world. It was not long before Heisenberg discovered that such researches had limitations, which, for reasons into which I need not enter and which no one disputes, cannot be overcome. There is a region beyond those limits, therefore, in which scientific certainty is impossible. This is Heisenberg's Principle of Uncertainty, which is universally accepted by physicists and with which, in itself, philosophers have no quarrel. But physicists soon went further, and deduced from it that this uncertainty applies, in however small a degree, throughout Nature. Therefore, they say, the strict Law of Causation —on which all science had been based and which philosophy had accepted from science—no longer holds. All that our knowledge is left to depend upon is probability, based upon statistics. In place of an invariable rule of effect following causes, what we term Chance becomes the ultimate factor in the universe.

This is the first of the points, in this province where science and philosophy meet and overlap, to which I would invite your attention. For many, probably most philosophers have never accepted, and do not now accept, this deduction from Heisenberg's Principle. They see no reason to doubt the validity of the long-established Law of the Uniformity of Nature. This may be formulated as follows: Where a specified combination of events has been followed by a particular event, then any other precisely similar combination will be followed by a similar event. They contend that, since centuries of investigation into matters that are within our knowledge have shown that events are always the consequence of causes, identical causes producing identical effects, with never an exception, it is legitimate to infer that, in matters beyond the range of our knowledge, the same law holds, unless there is reason to believe the contrary. As to "Chance," that they urge is a fiction, not to be found anywhere in the universe: quite incapable of playing any part whatever in the processes of Nature. "Chance," as was well said by Leslie Stephen, "is a name for our ignorance."

Nor is it only philosophers who refuse to accept this impugning of the universal law of Causation. Some of the greatest physicists of our time have also rejected it. Einstein, the author of the Theory of Relativity, and Max Planck, the promulgator of the Quantum Theory, have both declared themselves against it. Rutherford, the joint discover of the electron, would never endorse it. I remember Madame Curie, the discoverer of radium, saying, when I had the

privilege once of meeting her and raised this particular point, that, although, being an experimental and not a theoretical physicist, she did not feel qualified to express an opinion, she felt pretty sure that, if we could become small enough to get inside the atom and watch what was going on, we should find the laws of Cause and Effect applying there as they do everywhere else.

It seems to be time therefore that physicists should consent to recognize that Heisenberg's Principle has no application to general philosophy. Measurement is one thing and causation is another, and, as Bertrand Russell has said, this Principle has to do only with measurement, not with causation. Because mathematical physicists have found that an insuperable uncertainty restricts their own methods and limits their own conclusions, we are not obliged to assume that a corresponding uncertainty must prevail in the processes of Nature. If the idea of a fundamental uncertainty is withdrawn from the field of philosophical discussion one, at least, of the sources of confusion that now hinder the advance of thought, will be removed.

III

A second point in dispute is the nature of Reality. The school of philosophy which I am here supporting—empirical philosophy—holds that there exists a real universe which man must accept—objective, given, wholly independent of his own mind and ideas. But the metaphysical physicists, who have been for some time dominant in the scientific world, do not agree to this. They hold that all that men can think about effectively is their own sense-data—the impressions brought by their sense-organs to affect their own minds. What the universe really is in itself, that, they say, we do not, and cannot know.

Take as an example a beautiful sunset. People go out to look at the glorious display of colours, and they are moved by its beauty. But those who are scientific-minded know quite well that there are in fact no colours out there in the sky, and no beauty. What is happening is that light-radiations from the sun are being refracted by water-vapour and dust particles in the atmosphere, and split up into light-waves of various wave-lengths. The human eye has the capacity to differentiate between those wave-lengths, and the brain can form consequental impressions which we designate as colours; waves of one set of wave-lengths causing us to see violet, others, about twice as long, red, the rest of the spectrum falling, in a uniform series, in between. Further, the mind is so constituted that certain combinations of colours, on a vast scale in the sky, stir it to emotion, and we say "there has been a lovely sunset to-night."

Or take a familiar object such as a table, these physicists say. We had always believed it to be hard, solid, smooth, brown, static. But we have learnt now that in fact it consists of atoms, and the atoms of particles; and that these are not hard, solid, smooth or brown, and they are not static but in violent motion. It is the same with everything else; so that, when we take away, one by one, the man-made qualities which we have ourselves put in, there is nothing left. The familiar universe has dissolved into unreality.

But those students of Nature who belong to the other school say that all this is fallacious. It is not true that when we take away the man-made "qualities" there is nothing left. In the sunset, there is left the sun and its radiation, the earth and its atmosphere, the clouds and the dust, the light of various wave-lengths, and the mechanism of our optic organs and nervous systems. In the table, there are the particles, organized into atoms, the atoms into molecules, the molecules into pieces of wood; and there is the capacity of the wood to hold together and resist pressure, and of its surface to reflect light-waves of one colour and to absorb the rest.

It is evident, therefore, that we are dealing in these matters with two categories of things and not only one. The first is a given universe, of marvellous variety, which existed long prior to man, and is wholly independent of him; it is real in its own right. The second category consists of our own impressions of some parts of that universe, our own appreciations and interpretations. These are such as the character of our own bodies and minds makes possible. Our interpretations are often mistaken. Many of man's ideas about the universe in primitive times were found to be wrong and have been corrected. But how would it have been possible to say that one thing was false and another was true; how would it be possible now for science to progress from error to truth through hundreds of observations and experiments, unless there existed some factual, objective universe to set the standard and decide the conclusions?

Nor is it the case that the table in its familiar shape and substance is any less real than the same table as a congeries of atoms. That it is solid for us, and for the cups and saucers we put on it, must be accepted as given fact. Consider also the window of the room: it is solid for the hand that presses against it, if the hand breaks the glass it may cut itself; it is solid for the bee that has blundered into the room and is struggling to get out; or for the rain and the wind beating on it from outside. But it is not solid for the sunlight that passes through it almost as if it were not there. Or consider the walls—solid for anyone who comes against them or for a nail that is being driven in; but not solid for broadcasting-waves on their way from a distant station to a portable radio-set isolated in the room. The question is in fact one of scale, not of reality or unreality. The

universe is just as real at the size level of our own terrestrial experience as it is at the molecular level, or at the atomic level, or the sub-atomic. The right distinction to be made is not between degrees of reality, but between our first category—the phenomena of Nature as they are in themselves, apart from man; and our second category—man's perceptions and interpretations of the same phenomena through his fallible senses and mind.

IV

But there is yet a third category in the field of physics—namely the forms of measurement and means of calculation that make up the apparatus of mathematics. These are indispensable, both to science and to the practical activities of civilized life. But they are not part of the objective universe; nor are they part of the sense-data in human minds that are direct reflexes from the phenomena of Nature. Mathematics consists of fictional abstractions, of figments created by the human imagination. These are not to be found anywhere in the cosmos. They are not merely unobservable; they are non-existent.

In this third category we may place the following and their like: arithmetical numbers, algebraical quantities, euclidean points, lines and planes, statistics, probabilities, differential equations; all geometrical systems; longitude and latitude; scales of temperature. Also to be included are space, time and spacetime; the electromagnetic field, inertial systems, mass, velocity and momentum; together with the theoretical "observer" of relativity, with his isolated frame of reference. (The character of the quantum is still a matter of debate.) Being figments, none of these can be admitted as factors in the physical processes of Nature. They are not dynamic. They cannot *do* anything at all.

But mathematical physicists appear not to admit this. Whitehead —eminent as mathematician as well as philosopher—has said, of the situation in which we now find ourselves, that it is a case of "confining thought to purely formal relations which then masquerade as reality. . . . Science relapses into the study of differential equations. The concrete world has slipped through the meshes of the scientific net. . . . There can be no true physical science which looks first to mathematics for the provision of a conceptual model. Such a procedure is to repeat the errors of the logicians of the middle ages."

V

The consequence is that present-day physics has brought us to a dead-end. It gives no answer—and at the moment does not attempt,

or even desire to give an answer—to questions, essential to an understanding of the factual world in which we live, questions which both the philosopher and the practical man are legitimately asking.

For example, when the radiation of the sun's light travels to the earth in a period of about eight minutes, what is it that carries it? That there is some process going on all the way and all the time is evident; for when there is an eclipse of the sun by the moon, the sunlight is stopped at the level of the moon's orbit; if a cloud comes across the sky, there is interference at the cloud level; if I move into the shade of a tree it is in order to benefit by interference at the level of the tree's foliage. Or consider again a radio-set when you tune in to a programme from a distant broadcasting station. What is happening, between the place where the station is and the place where your set is, that enables you to hear the music or the talk, whatever it may be, that is going on there, far away? We know that there must be a process, because the transmission is liable to interference at any point, by atmospheric disturbances, or perhaps by deliberate jamming from other stations; also the signals are stronger in hours of darkness than when affected by sunlight; and further the beams can be reflected by ionized layers in the stratosphere. None of this would be possible unless something was travelling between the one point and the other. There must be a process; and it must be physically real—of the same order of reality as the broadcasting station itself, with its engines and generators, and valves and antennae; or as the radio-set, full of complicated apparatus, which you can manipulate by turning little knobs with your fingers. Whatever it is that leaves the station must be physical, and whatever arrives where you are and reproduces the programme must also be physical. We are bound to infer that what carries it must itself be physical and real, and not metaphysical nor yet mathematical.

Again, we may ask what it is that transmits gravity. As Bertrand Russell has said, a philosopher may doubt the reality of gravitation, "but if he steps over the edge of a cliff he can expect a nasty bump at the bottom." What is it, too, that permits momentum? If I have a ball in my hand and open my fingers the ball moves to the ground; but if I make a throwing movement with my arm and then release it, why does the ball continue to move in the direction of the throw, and not drop at once to the ground the moment it leaves the hand? What is it that sustains it in a horizontal line against the perpendicular pull of gravity which is affecting it all the time?

Or consider a shell, fired from one of the big guns of a battleship, that is travelling, perhaps five or ten miles, towards its target. Think of it, weighing half a ton or more, high in the air over the sea, moving at great speed. How is it that it should be moving? The effect of the expanding gases from the explosive in the gun that started it on its

journey was spent long ago. The physicists tell us that it has "gathered momentum" and "moves by its own impetus." But the "it" which is in question is an inert hollow piece of metal, filled with a chemical substance and fitted with a fuse. It does not comprise any motive force of its own, like a bird or an airplane or a rocket. What physical process is indicated by the words "momentum" and "impetus," "gathered" and "moves"? The shell in itself is passive and static: it cannot "gather" anything or "move" anywhere. To speak accurately we ought to say, not "it moves," but that "it is being moved." What is it that is present, invisible, unrecognized, but physically real, which is carrying the shell onward, up there through the clouds, and at the end will impel it to crash with great violence into the target? What will be occurring, there and then, to make that happen? If we want to understand the physical working of the universe, somehow we must get to understand what it is that does that.

We may ask yet another question. Nuclear physicists find that, in certain experiments in the laboratory, new particles of various kinds appear—most of them quickly disappear again; some are stable and may endure for a considerable time. This is giving rise to a theory of Continuous Creation. What is the matrix out of which such particles come, and into which they relapse? Some of the exponents of the theory of Continuous Creation—Hoyle and Bondi for example —have said, and do say, that they are "created out of nothing." But that is quite unacceptable. That is mere magic—not science.

Such questions as these, left unanswered, have revived the old problem of the existence of an ether—of some universal medium, physically real. But it cannot be the quasi-gaseous ether accepted by many physicists in the nineteenth century, and earlier. Convincing reasons against this were given; it was abandoned, and no one now tries to revive it.

The spacetime continuum of relativity theory was offered by Einstein as a substitute, and this has found a place in the teaching and the text-books of physics ever since. But the argument put forward in this lecture, if it were accepted, would not endorse this. It regards the spacetime continuum, and the whole system of relativity, as constructs of the human mind. They are fictional abstractions. They are not to be found in the objective universe. Nor are they even sense-data directly springing from phenomena of Nature, such as the colours of a sunset or the solidity of a table. They are not in our first category, nor yet in the second; they belong to the third—to the mathematical figments, which—valuable, necessary as they are to science—can of themselves play no part in the workings of Nature.

VI

Sir Oliver Lodge gave the Roscoe Lecture of twenty-five years ago, 1927. He took as his subject "Energy." He argued that there must be an ether, and he held that it consisted of energy. He said, "Matter seems to become a sort of accident in the universe. The real thing is the intangible and insensible ether, the thing of which all these things are made, in my view." And again, "We shall find that the fundamental thing in the material universe is the ether in its various forms of energy." He also wrote, about that time, a short book on the same theme, with the title *Ether and Reality*.

J. J. Thomson, one of the great figures of modern science, the discoverer of the electron, towards the end of his life wrote this to a correspondent: "I differ from you about the value of the conception of an ether, the more I think about it the more I value it. I regard the ether as the working system of the universe. I think all mass, momentum and energy are seated there. . . ."

Recently Professor Dirac, of Cambridge, the most eminent mathematical physicist in this country at the present time, has published a paper which he begins by saying—"If one re-examines the question in the light of present-day knowledge, one finds that the ether is no longer ruled out by relativity, and good reasons can now be advanced for postulating an ether"; and ends—"with the new theory of electrodynamics we are rather forced to have an ether." So it is possible that there may yet be a change of heart among the physicists!

There is a difficulty, however, in conceiving a universal medium consisting of energy, if by that is understood, as we usually do understand it, energy in action. It would seem that that could give us nothing but a raging chaos, instead of the ordered universe that we have. But if we conceive that energy may exist in two states, quiescent and active, passing easily from one to the other, this difficulty can be overcome. Nature gives us innumerable examples of the same entity existing in more than one state. Objects may be hot or cold—in a state of thermal agitation or not. The same molecules may be at one time in a gaseous state, at another liquid, at another solid—steam, water, ice, for instance. So the surface of the sea may be quiescent or stormy, the atmosphere calm or windy; our memories, again, may be dormant or active; people at a philosophical lecture may be asleep or awake. It should not be regarded as extraordinary, therefore, if, underlying all phenomena, there were an ocean, so to speak, of energy, universal and eternal, normally quiescent, but capable, in particular places and at particular times, of being stirred into activity. If that were so we might discover in such transformations a single and simple answer to all our questions—as to radiation, gravitation, momentum and the rest. Such transformations

need not be harder to conceive than the transformations of energy which we observe every day, and are often able ourselves to bring about—light, heat, electric currents, gravity producing hydro-electric power, mechanical work—most of these interchangeable with one another. And as to the physical reality of energy—observe the effects of a stroke of lightning; watch the tide creeping up the shore; think of the explosion of an atomic bomb; or consider streams of radio-active particles in an atomic research establishment such as Harwell, flying about the place, liable to cause deadly injury to the bodies of the scientists at work there, if not stopped by screens of lead or the like; or again, at the other end of the scale of magnitude, see the planets circling in their orbits. These are all examples of energy. And they are real. They are not the product of mental constructs; they are not the outcome of differential equations; they are not to be accounted for by metaphysics.

Those who would wish to pursue this subject may care to look at a little book that I published in 1951, with the title *Essay in Physics*, in which possible consequences, in the sphere of natural phenomena, of a conception of this kind, are suggested for consideration.

VII

In all this I have been discussing the physical universe, the subject-matter of the sciences of physics and chemistry. But that is not all that exists. My three categories have left something out, and something of the greatest significance. There is still another category: there is what we term Life and Mind.

The relation between these on the one hand and Matter on the other has always been one of the chief sources of controversy in both philosophy and science. Materialists hold that sooner or later life and mind may be explained in terms of matter. Idealist philosophers try to persuade us that matter is the product of mind, and that ideas only are real. But the world has never been convinced by either the one school or the other. There seems to be a stubborn difference between mental and material processes which cannot be reconciled. The thoughts and actions of the creative artist, for example, our judgments between right and wrong, our valuations of beauty or of truth, seem to be of a different order from the combination of two atoms of hydrogen with one of oxygen to form a molecule of water, or changes in the weather, or a landslide, or a flash of lightning. No one has yet been able to solve the problem of the physical basis of mind, of the relation between mind and brain. We are reduced to the acceptance, at all events for the time being, of a duality. That was the conclusion reached by the late Sir Charles Sherrington, our greatest physiologist: he wrote, near the end of his long life, "That

our being should consist of *two* fundamental elements offers I suppose no greater inherent improbability than that it should rest on one only." The new sciences of biophysics and biochemistry are pressing forward eagerly into this province: they have won some preliminary successes, and it may be that some day they may help us to solve the problem. But for the time being there seems to be little prospect of any conclusion being generally agreed.

And beyond this lies another mystery—this one unlikely to be solved—the ultimate mystery. How is it that anything exists at all? Our own bodies; the earth on which we stand; the stars and their planets; the galaxies, each with hundreds of millions of stars; the visible cosmos of hundreds of millions of galaxies; the ether; matter, mind, life, ideas, God—how is it that anything exists? How? Where? When? Why?

That is beyond the range of human conception. On that there is nothing to be said. That is, for us, the realm of silence.

What is the upshot of this brief survey of man's ideas about the universe? Simply this—that the present generation, and the next, have the duty to try to disentangle the intellectual confusion that now leaves the world without leadership, wandering bewildered: to try to unravel the twisted tangle of ideas—philosophic, scientific, religious—that discourages the will and dissipates the purpose. Let us unpick the knots and straighten the strands and lay them side by side. Then we may twist them into a cord—a threefold cord, very strong, strong as a climber's rope. And, indeed, the task that faces modern men is very like that of a band of climbers, trying to make their way, roped together, through difficult and dangerous passes, and onwards up dizzy untrodden slopes. Perhaps—who knows—we may prove to be the pioneers for all the future generations. When once we have crossed the steep and difficult barrier, we may be finding new ways into spacious regions, pleasant and fertile, that lie beyond—new conquests yet to be made by the undauntable spirit of man.

ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF HEGEL[1]

W. H. WALSH, M.A.

In asking me to talk about Hegel in your series on synoptic philosophies, I take it that you were anxious to discover whether there are any positive merits in Hegel's ideas. I need hardly remind you that such an approach to this particular philosopher is not a very common one in this country to-day. Indeed, of all those who have been thought, at one time or another, to have produced ideas of lasting philosophical importance, Hegel is at present easily the least in repute. Nor is it the case with him as with certain other writers (Spinoza, for instance, or some of the Scholastics) that his ideas are uninteresting or unintelligible to the present generation but are thought all the same to be likely to have an appeal and an importance at some future date when the general intellectual climate has changed; the common verdict on him is far less friendly than that. If opinions on the subject were canvassed among students of philosophy in Great Britain to-day, there can be little doubt that the majority would write Hegel off as the supreme example of a philosopher who tried to construct an elaborate metaphysical system in the most blatantly *a priori* manner, and who succeeded in getting himself taken seriously only because of his adroitness in verbal tricks. Modern logic having exposed these tricks as what they are, the whole Hegelian system can now be revealed as being without content and value, and Hegel himself be dismissed as the intellectual charlatan Schopenhauer long ago declared him to be. To this some would add that his charlatanry was the more contemptible because it involved not only fraud but fraud undertaken for a sinister purpose: the object of the whole vast construction was nothing less than to induce people to put up with the burdens of a reactionary political regime. Hegel was the official philosopher of the Prussian State, according to this account, and accepted without shame the task of making the actions of the authorities of that state appear in a favourable light by proving that whatever is real is reasonable.

I must obviously begin by trying to meet these charges, or at any rate the cruder versions of them now in circulation. The second will be familiar from the writings of Dr. Popper. "When in 1815 the reactionary party began to resume its power in Prussia," Dr. Popper writes (*The Open Society*, vol. II, p. 28), "it found itself in dire need of an ideology. Hegel was appointed to meet this demand, and he did so by reviving the ideas of the first antagonists of the open society,

[1] A lecture given to the University of London Philosophical Study Group, November 1951.

Heraclitus, Plato and Aristotle." Again (*op. cit.*, II, p. 30): "There is nothing in Hegel's writing that has not been said better before him. There is nothing in his apologetic method that is not borrowed from his apologetic forerunners. But he devoted these borrowed thoughts and methods, with singleness of purpose, though without a trace of brilliancy, to one aim: to fight against the open society, and thus to serve his employer, Frederick William of Prussia." "I shall try," Dr. Popper announces (II, p. 33), "to show how much light is thrown on Hegelianism if we interpret it in this way, that is to say as an apology for Prussianism." In my opinion a little attention to dates and places will show that the amount of light thrown is precisely nil. Hegel was not a Prussian at all but was born in Stuttgart; he was educated in Tübingen in Swabia, and taught in one capacity or another in Bern, Frankfurt, Jena, Bamberg, Nuremberg, and Heidelberg (none of which was then under Prussian rule) before being appointed professor in Berlin in 1818. By that date he was 48 years old, had published three of his four main works—the *Phenomenology of Mind* (1807), the larger *Logic* (1812) and the *Encyclopaedia* (1817)—and had worked out not only the main ideas of his philosophy but most of the details as well. To suggest in these circumstances that his system was devised as a support for the Prussian monarchy seems utterly fantastic. It is true that the only book Hegel published during his tenure of office in the University of Berlin was his notorious *Philosophy of Right*, which appeared in 1821, and that he left no doubt in that work of his own attitude to contemporary liberal movements. The fact remains, however, that the principles of Hegel's political views, as of his general philosophical position, were arrived at long before he came to an official post in Prussia. Many of the features of his political thought which we find least attractive to-day—for example, his emphasis on the rights of the State against those of any other association, and his contempt for what he called "morality of conscience" as opposed to "social ethics"—are to be found not only in the part of the *Encylopaedia* which corresponds to the *Philosophy of Right*, but also in the essay on natural law which he wrote when a lecturer at Jena in his early thirties. The doctrine of the Organic State was not invented by Hegel to bolster up reaction in Prussia, but was held by him throughout his life; and his holding it is to be connected as much with his general cast of mind and admiration for the political life of the ancient Greeks as with its bearing on contemporary politics.

But to absolve Hegel from the charge of being a timer-server is not, of course, to show that he deserves to be taken seriously as a philosopher; and here we must turn to the first objections raised above. Was not Hegel (we may well be asked) a metaphysician in the worst sense of that term, one who sought to foist on his public what

looked like a series of instructive propositions but was in fact the product of nothing more than verbal jugglery, helped out by the grossest disregard for the doctrines of elementary logic (flagrant violation of the principle of contradiction, for instance, and open confusion of predicative with existential statements)? And is not the poverty of his thought shown by the absurdities of his philosophy of nature, where, as every undergraduate knows, he offered logical proofs of "truths" which we now realize are not true at all? How could a philosopher who let himself in for extravagances of that kind have anything to say which might be of interest or importance?

Since my whole paper is, in effect, an attempt to answer these criticisms so far as they can be answered, I shall not at this stage make a direct reply to them, but shall merely put forward preliminary comments on one or two points.

First, I think it is fair to claim that Hegel himself contributed substantially, by the way in which he set out his work, to the picture of himself as a word-spinning metaphysician who sought to deduce empirical truths *a priori*. In the *Encyclopaedia*, which alone gives a conspectus of his philosophy as a whole, the first topic treated of is "logic" or "the Idea," and it is only after a series of discussions, as oracular as they are abstract, of concepts of a high degree of generality that the argument moves on to the spheres of nature and mental life in which these concepts are alleged to find concrete embodiment. Hegel is insistent throughout on the logical priority of the Idea to Nature and Spirit (to use his own terms), and this suggests that he first evolved an abstract conceptual scheme from the depths of his own consciousness and then insisted that it must be reflected in the order of fact. I think myself that this way of looking at Hegel's mature philosophy is not wholly without foundation, but it must be pointed out on the other side that it cannot stand for a moment as an account of his own philosophical development. The publication of his early writings and lectures in the last fifty years has made abundantly clear that Hegel's original interests were not at all in questions of logic or metaphysics, but rather in certain topics belonging to history, theology and politics, and that it was from reflection on these that he first developed his dialectical scheme. Historically, the Hegelian logic was subsequent to some parts at any rate of the Hegelian philosophy of Spirit, a fact which makes his observations on questions connected with, e.g., history more worthy of our attention than might at first sight appear.

Secondly, it should be said that if Hegel does violence to the rules of formal logic, he at least does it with his eyes open. He would certainly not have agreed that any system of thought which fails to acknowledge those rules as absolute must be dismissed as absurd. His aim was to substitute for the traditional logic, which in his view

dealt entirely with lifeless abstractions, a new logic of living thought; and the point of view he adopted in carrying out this task was necessarily very different from that of formal logicians, whether of his day or ours. This is not to say that Hegel's attitude to formal logic and his claim to have discovered a new kind of logic are capable of defence; it is merely to make his position on these points clear.

Finally, for the benefit of those critics who lay particular stress on the absurdities of Hegel's philosophy of nature, it is perhaps legitimate to point out that, of all the parts of philosophy, philosophy of nature seems to have occupied Hegel's attention least. There is no evidence that he concerned himself with it at all until he came under the influence of Schelling about 1800, and though he retained it as an integral part of his philosophy from then on he never seems to have had the first-hand interest in the natural sciences which he clearly had in the humanities.[1] To judge his whole enterprise by his success or failure in this particular field seems accordingly a little severe. Of course the fact that Hegel thought it necessary to construct a philosophy of nature and nevertheless botched the job in the way he did is a serious reflection on him on which his critics are perfectly right to insist; but his deficiencies here are not enough to condemn him out of hand. For the possibility remains that his theories, whilst lacking the overall truth Hegel himself claimed for them, are considerably more effective in some fields than in others; and this is a possibility we can test only by looking to the points at which he may be expected to be strong as well as to those where he is generally recognized to be weak.

Most of those who criticize Hegel (or, for that matter, any of the classical philosophers) to-day follow the procedure of first selecting from their author an isolated statement or set of statements which looks as if it might be interesting and informative, and then showing, by reference to some independent standard which all sensible persons might be expected to acknowledge, e.g. the results of formal logic, the deliverances of common sense or "ordinary language," that the statement in question is meaningless, vacuous or at best false. This procedure is one which can be used with particular effect to discredit a writer like Hegel, who is given to writing in an oracular way and whose portentous pronouncements can be made to look ridiculous without undue difficulty. Nevertheless, I suggest that the procedure is never a very satisfactory one, and that it is particularly unsatisfactory when applied to Hegel. It should scarcely be necessary, in these days when philosophers pride themselves so much on their attention to language, to make the elementary point that the same

[1] For some evidence on the other side see, however, H. Glockner, *Hegel* Vol. I, pp. 359 ff. (I am indebted to Prof. T. M. Knox for this reference.)

form of words may be used by different people to convey different ideas. When Bradley said that time is unreal, Moore took him to mean that there are no temporal situations, and thus that it is false that it is whatever time it is now; but whatever Bradley meant by his pronouncement, he clearly did not mean that (and indeed he said as much). Those who criticize Hegel by selecting isolated statements from his work and then asking whether they are true or false without regard to their special context or the special features of their author's vocabulary and way of thought fall into much the same mistake. They fail to realize that before you can criticize a system of ideas effectively you have to think yourself into that system; and this is particularly true where the concepts concerned are, as they are in the case of Hegel, of a very strange nature, the thought being remote from common sense, though the language in which it is expressed has at any rate some relation to ordinary speech. I suspect that, in the end, much the most effective way of confuting any philosopher is to show that his theories break down from within; to show, that is to say, that there are points he is forced to concede which he cannot satisfactorily explain on his own principles. I admit that the word "satisfactorily" here leaves a loop-hole for what may be called independent criticism, the possibility of which I do not wish to rule out. I feel sure, however, that such criticism is without value unless it has been preceded by criticism of the internal kind.

But how are we ever to put ourselves in a position to examine the theories of Hegel; how are we to think ourselves into this very difficult system of ideas? The method commonly adopted by historians of philosophy and Hegelian apologists for making us see sense in it is to try to show us how Hegel's problems and solutions arose directly out of those of his predecessors, especially his most recent predecessors in German philosophy. This way of looking at his philosophy is one which Hegel himself encouraged: as is notorious, he thought his own theories summed up whatever was of importance in all previous theories. Despite this sanction, the method is not very satisfactory. For one thing, few students of philosophy in this country to-day know much about the classical German idealists, except perhaps Kant; and even Kant they tend to see in a very different way from that in which Hegel presented him (thus Hegel placed special emphasis on the Kantian doctrine of antinomies, which tends to be thought of as a minor affair by those who, like most of us now, are more interested in the strong empiricist element in Kant). Moreover, this approach to Hegel, representing his thought as it does as the result of an effort to grapple with a number of highly technical questions, fails, for the beginner at least, to breathe any life into it. When we are told that Hegel developed something called "Absolute Idealism," which contrasted with, though it was descended from,

the "Subjective Idealism" of Kant and Fichte, we do not get very far towards understanding him. For we do not see, on this way of going about the matter, what it was that set him thinking at all: what experiences or features of experience so impressed him that he felt compelled to elaborate his extraordinary system to do justice to them. Yet this is precisely the subject we should wish to know about if we are to assess him as a synoptic philosopher.

You will see from this that I am assuming that Hegel's philosophy was evolved not merely to solve certain technical difficulties in the work of his predecessors, but to embody what I must call some fundamental insight of his own. I have tried to argue elsewhere that metaphysical systems come into being when a philosopher seizes on some key idea which proves especially illuminating in a limited field of enquiry and proceeds to give it unrestricted validity, reading all experience in terms of it. This thesis, whatever its merits as regards other philosophers, can be given empirical confirmation in the case of Hegel. For, thanks to the publication of the early writings which was referred to above, we are in a position to reconstruct pretty well the whole development of his thought. We can see how he began with studies which were in effect not philosophical at all, but primarily concerned the interpretation of certain movements in the history of religion, and went on to attach progressively wider significance to the ideas he found valuable in connection with them. And this gives us a very different picture of Hegel from that painted by most historians of philosophy. Instead of the arid metaphysician whose whole preoccupation was with empty logic-chopping, we now find ourselves confronted with a Hegel whose central interest was in a special class of facts, and who developed his philosophy on the basis of his understanding of those facts. Whatever we may think of his ultimate results, we must agree that the general procedure he followed in arriving at them is as intellectually respectable as that of any other metaphysician.

In trying to substantiate this thesis, I shall begin with some remarks about Hegel and Romanticism. Philosophical movements are often most readily understood when seen in relation to the non-philosophical interests of their time, and Hegel's philosophy is here no exception. He was born in the year 1770, and thus grew up to manhood at a time when the popular *Weltanschauung* of the Enlightenment was everywhere under attack—by poets and religious men who were repelled by its dry intellectualism and antipathy to the feelings and the passions, by political thinkers and enthusiasts who could find no satisfaction in its predominantly individualist formulae for the warm aspirations they felt under the influence of an incipient nationalism, finally by philosophers who found their urge to speculate heavily checked by the prevailing emphasis on the need

for thought to be clear and precise and by injunctions to observe the inevitable limits of human knowledge. Romanticism is perhaps best characterized in general terms as an anti-scientific and anti-intellectualist movement. In the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, when scientific advance was so rapid, no limit appeared to be set to the possible triumphs of the human intellect: there was no field on which the light of dispassionate analysis could not be turned with profit. After the great achievements of the seventeenth century in the field of the physical sciences, the special task of the eighteenth century, as the sub-title of Hume's *Treatise* reminds us, was to apply the same type of reasoning to "moral subjects," i.e. to human affairs. But though this programme was carried out with diligence, its results were less satisfactory than had been hoped. Foundations were laid for economics, psychology and (we may perhaps add) philosophical analysis as they exist to-day, but the understanding of human nature which was originally hoped for proved elusive. As the century wore on men became more and more aware that the philosophy of the *Aufklärung*, comprehensive as it was, was also uncommonly thin: that there were whole aspects of life to which it did scant justice. And their dissatisfaction with this state of affairs expressed itself in the form of a general distrust of the intellect. The intellect, it began to be said, is the great divider: moving as it does entirely in the sphere of abstractions, it necessarily separates what in reality is united and in so doing distorts the true nature of things. There is an interesting passage in Hegel's *Encyclopaedia* where the point is made with commendable clarity in the context of a critique of empiricism:[1]

> In order to form experiences [he says] Empiricism makes especial use of the form of Analysis. In sense-perception we have a concrete of many elements, the several attributes of which we are expected to peel off one by one, like the skins of an onion. In thus dismembering the thing, it is understood that we disintegrate and take to pieces these attributes which have coalesced, and add nothing but our own act of disintegration. Yet analysis is the process from the immediacy of sensation to thought: those attributes, which the object analysed contains in union, acquire the form of universality by being separated. Empiricism therefore labours under a delusion, if it supposes that while it analyses objects it leaves them as they were: it really transforms the concrete into an abstract. And as a consequence of this change the living thing is killed: life can exist only in the concrete and one. . . . It is where analysis never gets beyond the stage of partition that the words of the poet are true:
>
> Encheiresin Naturae nennt's die Chemie,
> Spottet ihrer selbst, und weiss nicht wie:
> Hat die Teile in ihrer Hand
> Fehlt leider nur das geistige Band.

The declaration here that "as a consequence of this change" (intel-

[1] § 38, *Zusatz*, translated by W. Wallace.

lectual reflection on an object or situation) "the living thing is killed: life can exist only in the concrete and one" would have been endorsed by many of Hegel's contemporaries besides Goethe, the author of the lines quoted. The thought was indeed both a commonplace at the time and one which played an important part in the development of Hegel's philosophical opinions.

It remains true, nevertheless, as M. Jean Hyppolite[1] has pointed out, that this emphasis on life as undivided totality was too widely shared in the closing years of the eighteenth century to serve as a mark of differentiation for Hegel's philosophy; nor for that matter could Hegel be characterized without inaccuracy as a simple philosopher of Romanticism. For one thing, the Romantic movement had already found philosophical expression by the time he came on the scene, notably in the theories of those who, like Jacobi, combined hostility to the intellect with belief in the existence of non-rational powers of immediate apprehension. "What is absolutely and intrinsically true," Jacobi wrote,[2] "is not got by way of reasoning and comparison: both our immediate consciousness of ourselves and our conscience are the work of a secret something in which heart, understanding and sense combine." But this shallow sort of intuitionism was not at all to the taste of Hegel, who rightly saw it as slurring over the real difficulties. The intellect might divide and distinguish in the way Jacobi said, but the fact remained that "we cannot do without this division, if it be our intention to comprehend."[3] A satisfactory theory of knowledge must not merely contrast intellect and intuition as black with white, but must account for the existence of each, showing how each is necessary to the other and how the two can be united in a further form of knowing not identifiable with either in its simple form.

Here we have the well-known pattern of opposition and reconciliation, thesis, antithesis and synthesis, which is so prominent in Hegel's mature thought. The point about it which ought to be stressed in the present context is that the negative element or "moment," as Hegel calls it, is just as essential to the scheme as is the positive. Hegel's was no simple philosophy of identity, in which all distinctions were swallowed up in an undifferentiated unity, a "night in which all cows are black," to use his own phrase. On the contrary, it was a theory whose author went out of his way to stress differences and oppositions, and to insist that the only true unity is one which overcomes differences but nevertheless preserves something of each of the different terms. This is indeed the characteristic

[1] "Vie et prise de conscience de vie dans la philosophie hégélienne d'Iéna": *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale*, 1938.

[2] Quoted by W. Wallace, *The Logic of Hegel*, p. 406.

[3] *Enclopaedia*, § 38, *Zusatz*.

feature of Hegelianism, which serves to mark it off from other philosophies with which it might well be confused.

Those who are familiar only with the later works of Hegel, where the dialectical process operates with the regularity of clockwork, or who remember the criticism of Kierkegaard that Hegel saw as united what life shows as divided, may well be sceptical about this claim; they may tend, moreover, to think of the dialectical pattern as something which Hegel imposed on his material in an arbitrary manner, as a merely logical device thought up for the purpose. I want now to try to show, by reference to some of Hegel's earliest writings, that his insistence on oppositions and crucial transitions was not entirely arbitrary, but was suggested to him by certain facts or supposed facts, and that he based himself on certain experiences when he suggested that oppositions could be at once cancelled and preserved.

In the volume of essays recently translated into English by Professors T. M. Knox and R. Kroner, under the title *Hegel's Early Theological Writings*,[1] are to be found the results of a number of attempts on Hegel's part, made when he was between the ages of 25 and 30, to bring out the true nature of the Christian religion. The details of these works, which are not philosophical in the strict sense, need not now concern us. What is important for our immediate purposes is to notice how Hegel goes about his task by opposing Christianity to the religions it displaced and showing how the latter gave way to it. Thus in one place (pp. 151–67) a long contrast is drawn between the "imaginative" religion of the Greek city states and the "positive" religion of Christianity, and there is an interesting analysis of the reasons why these pagan cults, spontaneous expression as they were of the religious life of those who practised them, were none the less forced to yield to a type of religion which was everything they were not—other-worldly when they were this-worldly, universal in its appeal when they had strictly local associations, a religion of all men as opposed to a religion of citizens. Unlike the philosophers of the Enlightenment, Hegel sees the explanation of this change not in the primitive character of Greek religion and the superior rational force of Christianity, but in the fact that each was peculiarly suited to the circumstances of its time: the religion of the city states disappeared because the city states themselves were superseded. The longest and most mature piece in the collection, "The Spirit of Christianity and its Fate," similarly develops a contrast between Judaism and Christianity. The religious life of the Jews is subjected to an incisive and extremely critical characterization in which Hegel interprets it as based on the relation-

[1] The passages that follow are quoted in this translation. It should be pointed out that the essays were not published by Hegel himself.

ship of master and slave (God for the Jews was a far-off tyrant with a big stick, whose word had to be treated as law), and contrasts it violently with the teaching of Jesus, who came to preach a religion of love not to be tied down to any legal or moral code. There is less stress here on the social background of religious beliefs, but once more Christianity is presented as the antithesis of the religion which preceded it, even if it remains true that some features of Jewish belief and practice survived to mar the purity of the new creed. The suggestion is already emerging, though the idea remains so far imprecise, that the rhythm of history is a rhythm of opposites.

At this stage there is no word of the reconciliation of opposites, but it is already clear that Hegel is moving towards that idea. What is more, evidence is not wanting of the nature of the models on which he relied in thinking it possible. Of particular interest in this connection are two short pieces printed at the end of the *Early Theological Writings*, with the titles "Love" and (somewhat misleadingly) "Fragment of a System." The essay on Love, which actually antedates "The Spirit of Christianity," contains much which anticipates the later system. Consider for example the following passage:

> The lover who takes is not thereby made richer than the other; he is enriched indeed, but only so much as the other is. So, too, the giver does not make himself poorer; by giving to the other he has at the same time and to the same extent enhanced his own treasure (compare Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*: "The more I give to thee, the more I have"). This wealth of life love acquires in the exchange of every thought, every variety of inner experience, for it seeks out differences and devises unifications *ad infinitum*; it turns to the whole manifold of nature in order to drink love out of every life. What in the first instance is most the individual's own is united into the whole in the lover's touch and contact; consciousness of a separate self disappears, and all distinction between the lovers is annulled (p. 307).

More ponderously, Hegel speaks in an earlier passage from the same essay of the way in which, in love, "life has run through the circle of development from an immature to a completely mature unity" and of how love cancels the oppositions which it generates itself, by depriving them of their foreign character. "In love the separate does still remain, but as something united and no longer as something separate; life senses life" (p. 305). The lover puts aside all thought of himself, to discover himself again in a richer form in his beloved. As Bradley saw (*Ethical Studies*, pp. 186–87), the thought behind Hegelianism is much the same as that expressed in Shakespeare's poem *The Phoenix and the Turtle*:

> So they loved, as love in twain
> Had the essence but in one;
> Two distincts, division none:
> Number there in love was slain. . . .

Reason, in itself confounded,
Saw division grow together:
To themselves yet either neither
Simple were so well compounded,

That it cried, How true a twain
Seemeth this concordant one!
Love hath reason, reason none,
If what parts can so remain.

Bradley's comment that "philosophy does not reach its end till the 'reason of reason' is adequate to the 'reason of love,' " serves to set out Hegel's philosophical aspirations precisely.

The "Fragment of a System," which dates from 1800, gives a different turn to a discussion of the same general problem. Here the suggestion is made that the concept of life, which, as I have already pointed out, bulked large in contemporary thinking, might serve for the purpose of thinking opposites. A living being could be represented without difficulty as a unity in diversity, a whole whose parts necessarily had an identity of their own but could not function apart from each other. The model thus seemed a plausible one, and was of course one on which later idealists placed great reliance; it was nevertheless emphatically rejected by Hegel in the context referred to. The notion of life, even that of infinite life, could not, he argued, be all-embracing, for the concept of life presupposes the concept of that which is not alive, and this it fails to comprehend. What is more (and here the argument is given a particularly interesting twist) the fault is not with this particular concept but with the human intelligence as a source of concepts:

> Every expression whatsoever [Hegel says] is a product of reflection, and therefore it is possible to demonstrate in the case of every expression that, when reflection propounds it, another expression, not propounded, is excluded. Reflection is thus driven on and on without rest . . . (p. 312).

Here Hegel states his case against the reflective understanding in what was to become his classical manner. The passage continues:

> But this process must be checked once and for all by keeping in mind that, for example, what has been called a union of synthesis and antithesis [? by Fichte] is not something propounded by the understanding or by reflection but has a character of its own, namely, that of being a reality beyond all reflection.

It is religion, apparently, not philosophy which enables us to affirm the existence of this reality beyond all reflection and to raise ourselves from the level of finite to that of infinite life; though the few pages of the manuscript which remain throw little light on how Hegel worked out this position or attempted to resolve its obvious paradoxes. The fragment, however, remains of special interest both

for the points on which it anticipates Hegel's later ideas and for those on which it does not.

If Hegel never again assigned to religion the priority over philosophy given it in this particular paper, it remains true that his thought was penetrated by religious ideas, and thus that, as Mr. G. R. G. Mure has recently put it,[1] "the theological language he often uses in the Logic is for him barely metaphor." Certainly he drew extensively on the symbols and dogmas of the Christian religion in seeking confirmation for, and illustrations of, his basic idea of opposition and reconciliation. The doctrine of the Trinity, for instance, was an obvious prototype of the Hegelian triad, which was also exemplified, though not entirely to Hegel's satisfaction,[2] in the ceremony of the Communion service (the spirit of Christ taking external shape in the bread and the wine, to return to its original form as they are consumed). It would not be too much, in fact, despite the suspicion Hegelianism has often excited among religious men, to describe it as offering a theocentric view of the universe; though it might be misleading in so far as it failed to do justice to the breadth of its author's interests. None the less, it is important for anyone who wants to make a dispassionate appraisal of this system of ideas to get this aspect of Hegel's thought clear. I should like to quote one more passage from his early works, this time from "The Spirit of Christianity," in illustration of it:

> The culmination of faith [he says, *op. cit.*, p. 273], the return to the Godhead whence man is born, closes the circle of man's development. Everything lives in the Godhead, every living thing is its child, but the child carries the unity, the connection, the concord with the entire harmony, undisturbed though undeveloped, in itself. It begins with faith in gods outside itself, with fear, until through its action it has separated itself more and more; but then it returns through associations to the original unity which now is developed, self-produced and sensed as a unity. The child now knows God, i.e., the spirit of God is present in the child, issues from its restrictions, annuls the modification, and restores the whole. God, the Son, the Holy Spirit.

In this piece of theological exegesis, which forms part of a long commentary on the teaching of Jesus, the central doctrines of Hegel's later philosophy are once again foreshadowed. The motifs of the circle returning on itself, and of the progress from implicit unity through self-estrangement to fully self-conscious unity in difference, are dominant in all his major writings from the *Phenomenology* onwards.

I must now leave this question of what ideas were important in Hegel's formative years, and pass on to a brief account of the

[1] *Philosophy*, vol. XXV, 1950, p. 394.

[2] Compare the discussion in *Early Theological Writings*, pp. 248–53.

working out of his finished system. Once he had decided (as he did about the year 1800) to give his main attention to philosophy, Hegel found himself confronted with two main tasks. One was to make good the bold claim, to which he had finally committed himself, that philosophical reason could achieve what in the "Fragment of a System" he had declared it could not, namely, demonstrate the possibility of a kind of thinking superior to the thinking of the understanding, about whose limitations he was now convinced; this amounted to the construction of a new sort of logic. The other was to come to grips with the philosophical ideas of his contemporaries and immediate predecessors, in the first place those of Schelling, which he began by thinking important but later came to consider as merely superficial, in the second place those of Kant, whose rigid dichotomy of sense and intellect and whose continued emphasis on the limitations of human knowledge had to be shown to be without foundation before his own theories could begin to seem plausible. The second task involved first, a determination of the comparative priorities of Nature and Spirit, and, second, a reconsideration of the problems about knowledge discussed in the *Critique of Pure Reason.*

I will begin with a few remarks about the problem of Nature and Spirit, which is perhaps less puzzling than may appear from the unfamiliar terminology in which it is necessary to refer to it. The problem was that of whether a unified interpretation of experience such as Hegel proposed was better presented in terms drawn from the study of nature or in terms drawn from the study of mental life. Schelling in his *System of Transcendental Idealism* (1800) sketched a metaphysical system whose categories were fundamentally biological; he thought of nature as a vast organism, and attempted to interpret all natural processes in organic terms. Hegel was sufficiently impressed by Schelling's attempt to find it necessary to have a philosophy of nature of his own and to make that philosophy rest on a rejection of the contemporary mechanistic conception of nature, but he attached far less general importance to biological concepts than Schelling. It was not in the sphere of nature that he found the most ready illustrations of the processes of opposition and reconciliation referred to above, but in the various manifestations of mind: both in the mental life of individuals and in what Hegel called "objective mind," mental life objectified in the form of institutions, traditions, customs, laws and so on. Nature differed from mind, for him, in being an order of things spread out over space and time and thus external to each other, a circumstance which made it impossible for the dialectical process to be fully reflected there. But the basic thought behind that process had been derived, as we have seen, from Hegel's interpretation of certain phases or aspects of human experi-

ence, and it is not surprising in consequence that it was to the products of human action, the spheres of history and politics for instance, that he turned for plausible illustrations of it. For him what was primarily intelligible, outside the abstractions of logic, was mental life or "concrete Spirit," as it has been called; nature was but a poor reflection of this, which owed such intelligibility as it had to the fact that it was striving to become like mind, though the attempt was doomed to perpetual failure. This point is perhaps worth bearing in mind to guard against the dangers of taking too literally the terminology in which Hegelian doctrines are sometimes presented; we should remember, for example, when it is said that he thought of the state as an organism, that this was not the real thought he was trying to express.

Hegel's criticism of the Kantian theory of knowledge is a subject I have discussed at length elsewhere. To avoid undue repetition, I shall concentrate here on a single point in it. As readers of his famous transcendental deduction of the categories will remember, Kant had made great play with the notion that the human intellect is a discursive faculty, i.e. that it is not a primary source of knowledge, originating materials of its own, but works on data furnished by another faculty. Kant's sharp separation between the senses, whose business it is to "intuit," and the understanding, whose whole function lies in thinking, is an immediate corollary of his holding this doctrine, whilst his conception of the thing in itself, if not logically entailed by it, was at least closely connected with it in his own mind. It was natural in these circumstances that Hegel, in common with many others of his generation, should have looked on this particular part of the Kantian philosophy with a baleful eye. It should be noticed, however, that he did not deny all truth to it, but rather tried to incorporate it in a wider account of his own. He admitted that a survey of those intellectual operations with which we are most familiar—a survey of common sense and scientific thinking—confirms the view that the human understanding is primarily a discursive instrument; but to this he added that there were other forms or levels of thought of which such a survey took no account. So far from its being true that human thinking moved on a single level, or at best on two, the muddled thinking of common sense and the clear thinking of science, the truth was that a large number of such levels could be distinguished, ranging from a stage where the element of thought was so little present that it might readily be confused with pure sensation, through the stages of common sense and scientific thought proper, where the element of discursive thought became most explicit, to a higher level which Hegel designated the thinking of reason, and whose main characteristic was that it claimed to be concrete rather than abstract, combin-

ing the main features displayed by both sense and scientific thought. On this view there was an element of discursivity or "mediation," as Hegel called it, at all levels of human thinking, but just as it was unimportant, because only implicitly present, in sense-perception, so again it was no longer of primary importance at the level of reason, which Hegel took, perhaps not altogether wisely, to be exemplified in philosophical thinking.

The plausibility of this theory of Hegel's turns on two main points. First, on whether he can give any good reason for putting the different kinds of thinking he distinguishes on a single scale, so that they form a developing series in the members of which the "true" nature of thought is progressively better brought out; and secondly, on whether he can give a clear account of the highest state of all, that of reason or philosophy.

It has become customary in recent philosophical discussion to denounce the thesis of "reductionism," according to which one type of language or set of concepts is taken as basic, and all others must be "reduced" to it if they are to claim logical respectability. Hegel would be in agreement with this recent move as regards its main point, but he would not be content, as the opponents of "reductionism" apparently are, to maintain that there just are irreducibly different kinds of language, and leave the matter at that. Now it must be admitted that Hegel's attitude here is greatly influenced by his tendency to see unity in all things, a presumption which strikes many present-day philosophers as wholly gratuitous (though why it should be gratuitous to say that all things are one but not gratuitous to say that everything is different from everything else I fail to see). But in addition to this general presumption he did have an argument on the subject which it would be well to consider. Put in terms which may be more readily intelligible than his own, his argument was that, at whatever level of language we operate, whether we use the relatively imprecise speech of everyday life, or the more carefully thought out language of scientific discourse, we tend constantly to see imperfections in our way of talking, to be dissatisfied with ourselves because we never quite manage to say what we mean. Such self-criticism, Hegel argued, would be impossible unless the critic had got beyond the stage of simply operating with a language: the thought of something better must also be present to his mind. And this something better, he added, was the same in every case: a single ideal of adequate speech dominated all our linguistic operations, though it must be admitted that our awareness of it varied greatly from one level to another.

Assuming now (which is perhaps hazardous) that this is a fair account of Hegel's thought, let us consider briefly whether the argument can stand up to criticism. That it would be criticized by many

modern philosophers I have no doubt. We might be told, for instance, that, like so many other traditional philosophical doctrines, it presupposed without any attempt at justification the primacy of the descriptive mode of speech, and fell down just because of its failure to recognize the fundamental difference between, say, issuing an order, expressing a moral judgment and stating a fact. And even if that objection were set aside as raising problems too large for discussion here, it might still be asked whether, taken only as applying to descriptive language, Hegel's conclusions were at all warranted. That we do tend to feel dissatisfaction with this sort of language or that—that, for instance, we frequently condemn common speech for its lack of precision or scientific language on the score of being too abstract—must indeed be admitted; but many contemporary philosophers would say that our condemnation here was simply misconceived. Common speech (they would argue) could not fulfil its everyday function without being vague and imprecise, whilst scientific language was of its nature abstract. Yet the fact remains that we do seem to be obsessed with the idea of a way of talking which combines the precision of scientific language, however paradoxically, with what Dr. Waismann has called the "open texture" of everyday speech; or, to put it in more traditional language which is nearer to Hegel's own, which operates with universals, but universals which are concrete not abstract. So far as the descriptive function of language is concerned, at any rate, it seems to me perfectly proper for Hegel to stress this fact. It remains true, however, that if he is to make good his position, whether against Kant or against modern linguistic philosophers, he has to do more than simply point out this common aspiration: he has to show that it is capable of realization in some degree at least. The presumption, after all, is that the ideal as Hegel conceives it involves an attempt to combine incompatibles, a search for a description which is at the same time a proper name or for a proper name which is at the same time a description; and this presumption must be met if the theory is to be taken at all seriously.

It was in his writings on logic that Hegel himself tried to deal with these questions. Few modern readers find these writings other than bewildering, and it will perhaps be best to make clear at once some of the reasons for the bewilderment. Part of the trouble, no doubt, lies in their very title: seeing the word "logic" we expect a treatment of, e.g., the forms and formal relations of propositions, or of other topics falling under the same general heading in philosophical tradition; but it is clear enough that Hegel had no such treatment in mind. A further source of difficulty is the baffling language Hegel uses to expound his ideas: there is a wealth of technical terms, which, however, seem to shift their meaning from context to context in a

way we might expect in a work of imaginative literature, but scarcely in what purports to be a scientific treatise. But the main difficulty of these works springs from the task Hegel had set himself in composing them. In the earlier part of this paper I have tried to show how his preoccupation with the idea of opposition and reconciliation, suggested to him by certain crucial experiences, combined with his antipathy to the abstractions of the reflective understanding to produce in his mind the notion of a completely new sort of logic, which would be in effect a logic of living thought, capable of overcoming the sharp antitheses of abstract conceptual systems by thinking opposites as at once diverse and united. The section on logic in the *Encyclopaedia*, and still more, the two-volume *Science of Logic* published in 1812, constitute the results of Hegel's efforts to give substance to this notion. The thesis of both works is that there is an aspect of thought of the very greatest importance to which no previous philosopher has done full justice; that no proper account can be given even of more familiar forms of thinking unless this aspect is recognized, since they can all be shown (or so Hegel thinks) to point forward to it; finally, that it is by stressing this aspect of thinking alone that we can hope to meet the Romantic criticism of the intellect as a purveyor of lifeless abstractions. To defend his thesis Hegel must not merely talk about the possibility of a living logic: he must actually show us what such a logic is like; and, being a bold man, it is this task which he attempts to carry out.

With the detail of this attempt I do not propose to concern myself now: only a full-scale commentary, considerably longer than Hegel's own cryptic though none the less substantial writings on the subject, would have any chance of doing justice to it. I should, however, like to remark on one feature of the enterprise which has, as I think, a certain interest for present-day philosophers. I refer to Hegel's attack on what he calls "the understanding" and his argument that the reasonable man must abandon its outlook in favour of Hegel's own. By "the understanding" Hegel intended to refer to the intellectual operations we perform, generally only in a half-conscious fashion, in everyday life, and with more explicit consciousness when we think about things scientifically. Underlying these operations are to be found, if Hegel is to be believed, both a logic and a philosophy. The logic is the formal logic of tradition, which Hegel accepted at its own level in an uncritical manner; the philosophy is that of most of his predecessors, but gets its clearest expression in the writings of Kant. It is characteristic of the understanding, on Hegel's interpretation of it, to try to see everything in a clear-cut way: to erect precise antitheses and make sharp dichotomies, insisting that whatever does not fit under one of a pair of opposing heads must unequivocally go under the other. Thus it is a feature of the logic of under-

standing that it gives unrestricted validity to the law of Excluded Middle, thereby ensuring that we declare of any statement that, if it is not true, it must be false; and of the philosophy of understanding that it seeks to achieve its ends by the use of antitheses, such as the division of propositions into synthetic and analytic, which claim to be exhaustive of their subject-matter. The assumptions here involved were vigorously attacked by Hegel, who pointed out that in many situations we find ourselves wanting to affirm both of a pair of propositions which, if taken literally, must be declared to be mutually contradictory, and argued that all sharp antitheses of the synthetic/analytic type (formal/material, as applied both in logic and in ethics, was his own favourite example) turn out to be inadequate because we come across border-line cases which we could put in one category or the other, but which have claims to belong to both. From the first point he concluded that the logic of the understanding (and for this purpose his imperfect grasp of the possibilities of formal logic is unimportant) is too rigid and too crude an instrument to bring out the nuances and subtlety of our actual thought; from the second that the associated philosophy is an inherently unstable one, resting on principles which it cannot sustain under criticism. Hegel himself sought to press home the last point by a trenchant criticism of the philosophy of Kant, but his condemnation, if valid, would obviously apply to a wide range of philosophers, including the classical empiricists and their successors to-day.

So far there is a curious similarity between Hegel's attitude on these points and that of some recent philosophers of the linguistic school, such as Dr. Waismann and Mr. Hampshire; but there are also important differences. For one thing Hegel would want to extend his strictures on the shortcomings of the understanding to cover the theories of, e.g., Professor Moore as well as those of Mr. Russell. Whilst admitting that the appeal to "what we say" is in some circumstances a valid philosophical move, he would not agree that "ordinary language" constitutes an independent court in which philosophical statements can be tested. Common language, on his view of it, may suggest philosophical truths, but this is precisely because it is not free of philosophical implications. On the contrary, it embodies a philosophical outlook, but one which is relatively incoherent, and would be seen to involve incompatible assertions if subjected to examination. Hegel diverges from recent philosophers still more radically in the conclusions he seeks to draw from the criticisms they agree in making. Whilst a writer like Dr. Waismann is content to show us that if we try to divide statements exhaustively into, e.g., analytic and synthetic there will always be cases which do not obviously fit into either category, with the implication that a broader classification is called for, Hegel attacks the idea that any

rigid form of classification could be satisfactory. Rigid classification, like abstraction itself, belongs in his view to a stage of thinking which philosophy must seek to transcend: however indispensable to the scientist, its shortcomings are such that it must involve those who use it in distortion and falsehood. Thus, the moral drawn by Hegel from reflection on the unsatisfactory character of the distinctions put forward by philosophers of the understanding is not that we should replace these by other distinctions, or cease to think philosophically, but rather that we should proceed to think in a way which does not involve hard-and-fast distinctions at all.

Without wishing to endorse Hegel's conclusion here, I suggest that it raises a question not sufficiently considered to-day. The spectacle of analytic philosophers taking the distinctions hazarded by their rasher colleagues and more innocent predecessors and showing how crude they are is by now a familiar one. But the critics here seldom tell us what we are to think when we reflect on the spectacle. Is it just that the world is full of a number of things, each of which is what it is and not another thing? We might be led to that conclusion by being made to see first, that every type of utterance has its own special logic, and, second, that there are far more types of utterance than might at first be supposed. But would not the logical conclusion of this line of thought be to abandon the consideration of *types* of utterance altogether and to concentrate, if that were possible, on elucidating the logic of particular statements? If we cannot satisfactorily classify propositions under two or three heads, what reason have we to suppose that we can do it under seven or ten? What guarantee have we that further scrutiny of individual cases will not reveal differences even inside classes previously thought to be homogeneous? The effect of recent work by analytic philosophers in this field is certainly to cause one to have grave doubts about the tenability of *any* classificatory scheme put forward in a philosophical context; it would be interesting to know whether this is in fact the lesson the philosophers in question mean to teach.

Now it may well be that Hegel's own solution to these difficulties is an impossible one. It amounted to the recommendation that we should abandon the logic of tradition, which took its stand on the notion of abstract identity (or, less mysteriously, on the principle of Excluded Middle), and elaborate instead a logic whose central concept would be that of identity in difference. Seen in the light of developments in formal logic in the present century, this might seem a reasonable enough programme: is not Hegel (we might ask) intelligently anticipating the modern demand for multivalued logics? But there is in fact a significant difference between these systems and that of Hegel, which we can perhaps bring out as follows. In a

three-value logic, to take the simplest of the non-traditional forms, the principle of Excluded Middle is indeed abandoned, and an attempt is made to work with concepts less precisely defined than the concepts envisaged by traditional logicians. Yet it remains true that in such a system at least one principle is assigned absolute validity, namely, the principle that every proposition must take one of the three values true, false and doubtful (the principle of Excluded Fourth), and the concepts involved must be defined with sufficient precision to make this principle applicable. *Mutatis mutandis*, the same must be said of any system of logic of the kind recent logicians have envisaged, whatever the number of its truth values: in every one some rule must be taken as absolute, and some rigidity be found in the conceptual system employed. Hegel's logic, by way of contrast, takes its stand on the view that to make any logical rule absolute, or give any concept fixed boundaries, is to fall into the cardinal error of the understanding, to divide what is in fact united and unite what is in fact divided. Rules of thought there must indeed be, for all thinking demands some sort of precision, but they must be rules of a curiously elastic kind, capable of adaptation to particular cases, like the μολίβδινος κανών of which Aristotle speaks in the *Ethics*.[1] Similarly there must be concepts, which is to say there must be general terms; yet to no such term must we assign a precisely fixed meaning, for the significance of each will vary from context to context. Concepts with sharp edges and a clear-cut content are "abstract," whereas the concepts of Hegel's logic claim to be "concrete."

For my part I find it very difficult to see how these requirements of Hegel's could be satisfied. Regardless of what we may think of any particular rule or conceptual scheme, it is surely of the nature of a rule *not* to vary from case to case and of a concept to have *some* definite content. Rules which can be modified to suit individual cases are just not rules at all, while concepts which lack all determinate content, even for the person who uses them, are incapable of application. Nor do I see how Hegel's appeal to the notion of identity in difference helps in this connection. To the criticism just made he might reply that he is not saying anything so silly as that the various instances of the use of the same general word are simply equivocal, but is prepared to allow that a recognizable identity runs through them all. The point is, however, to discover what this concession amounts to. If Hegel means what he says—if he agrees that, however ill-defined its boundaries, each concept has a central core which remains the same in all its concrete applications—then he seems to be involved in the same kind of abstraction he imputes to his opponents, and his logic does not differ in principle from theirs. And

[1] *Ethics*, 1137*b*, 30.

if he denies that this is his position, what alternative is open to him? Is there in fact any alternative consistent with a continued use of general words? And if Hegel's logic requires him to dispense with the use of general words, how can he even formulate his own theories, let alone communicate them to others? A philosopher persuaded of this conclusion would be reduced to the predicament of Cratylus, who said nothing but merely wagged his finger.

Yet to dismiss Hegel's logic, and with it the whole Hegelian system, with a comment of this sort is after all scarcely satisfactory. At the least we should give Hegel the credit of his negative achievements. More clearly than any previous philosopher he saw the limitations of a logic of the traditional two-value type; he realized that on many occasions we say things which will not readily fit the requirements of such a logic ("it is and it isn't," "that is not quite true," are familiar examples), and grasped correctly that this fact has important philosophical implications. That he himself drew what seems to be the wrong lesson from the situation in his polemic against the understanding is less important than that he saw there was a lesson to be drawn. It may well be that, if we are to say anything specific at all, we must make more concessions to the understanding and its principle of abstract identity than Hegel was in practice prepared to make; though it is fair to remember that in theory he left ample room for such concessions, as his stress on the "negative moment" in thought testifies. But even if our final verdict on Hegel's own logical system is unfavourable, it will not follow that the whole idea of such a logic must be denounced as absurd. As noted already, the criticisms we make of common speech on the one hand and scientific discourse on the other strongly suggest the operation in us of an ideal of the Hegelian type, in which the virtues of both are combined in a way of speaking which is neither; and the instances to which Hegel points of the reconciliation of opposites lend some support to the view that the ideal is not an empty one, even if they will not bear the full weight Hegel seeks to put upon them. Finally, there is this point to be noticed. Even though we find ourselves forced to accept the dictum (with which incidentally Hegel himself would be in formal agreement) that whatever can be said can be said clearly, there is none the less constant pressure on us to recognize that there are many things we want to say but cannot say clearly. Poets, novelists and mystics at any rate find themselves in this position, and their existence is enough to cast doubt on the view that understanding of the world can come only from following scientific methods in the narrow sense of the term. Hegel had the great merit of taking seriously these non-scientific forms of utterance and of trying to assimilate the obscure insights they appear to embody: his philosophy, whilst in intention a form of rationalism, was built on a far broader

basis than any previous philosophy of the same general type. It is this feature of it, I suspect, which is the main source of its strength, and which makes it, for all its obscurity and the undeniable extravagances of its author, worthy of fresh attention from philosophers to-day.

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EXISTENTIALISM

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If one takes a course in philosophy to-day at a British university, a discreet silence is usually observed about existentialism. Often the professors understand little of its methods or its doctrine. If their excuse in part is the inaccessibility in English of standard existentialist texts, it is true also that philosophers trained in the "critical philosophy" now in vogue feel a certain aversion to existentialism or, at all events, to the notion they have formed of it. If Christianity was a scandal to the Greeks and remains a scandal, as Dr. Brunner has recently told us, to contemporary humanists, existentialism is a scandal to the positivists. The latter are aware that the existentialists habitually trespass in the fields of religion, ethics, aesthetics and psychology, fields which, on the positivist view, should be reserved to other disciplines than philosophy, which has its own distinctive subject-matter and approach. They know that certain existentialists, notably Heidegger, provide a happy hunting ground for examples of "metaphysics." They have heard that existentialism has sought to turn the tables on positivism by accusing it, if not of metaphysics, at all events of a barrenness of significant content, of a preoccupation with mere logistics which removes philosophy completely from men's business and bosoms. If the positivist accuses the existentialist of perpetrating "nonsense" in a technical sense, the latter retorts by accusing the positivist of reducing philosophy to nonsense in a pragmatic sense. Most positivists would indeed agree with Wittgenstein that philosophy, as they understand it, is concerned with Nothing, that it tells you nothing about the world. The provision of data about the world they hold to be the function of science. The challenge of the existentialist to the positivist is essentially with regard to this basic assumption of the latter as to the true function of philosophy; to meet the challenge needs a better understanding of the existentialist position than the positivist usually possesses; it is much safer and easier to ignore it.

Mr. Blackham's excellent book[1] on six leading existentialists should make it increasingly impossible for British philosophy to occupy this ostrich-like position. He has taken his thinkers seriously and has been richly rewarded, and his readers can reap the advantage. He writes: "When all is said and done, these six thinkers remain formidable persons, marvellously gifted, highly trained, masters of Western culture, with exceptional seriousness of purpose

[1] *Six Existentialist Thinkers*, G. H. J. Blackham. Routledge 15s.

and a profound personal experience. One may not be convinced by the total philosophy of any one of them, but, odd as they are, they are representative because they are trying not merely to think but personally to live the situation of man embedded in the situation of their time. They are profoundly in touch; whatever one makes of them, to have no use for them is to be profoundly out of touch." Mr. Blackham has penetrated deeply into their thought; better than any other English interpreter up to the present date, he has understood them. If I were to make any criticism of his book, it is that he has kept himself too much in the background and given us little or no indication of his own approach; the general estimate at the end of his work remains still a summary and not an interpretation. However, our especial need at this juncture is a greater understanding of the thought of the existentialists and his contribution to that end is extremely useful.

It may be of value to attempt some brief statement, with the help of Mr. Blackham's book, of the basic positions of the existentialists, and to draw some tentative conclusions on their place in the development of thought. First of all, it is clear that existentialism belongs to that category of philosophies which derive from a powerful moral impulse and are based on a distinctive ethical affirmation. The existentialist affirmation is as to the value of the "authentic" in human personality. All the thinkers of the school distinguish between the authentic and the inauthentic in human beliefs and attitudes and give a detailed analysis and description of the modes of personal existence that are involved. In Kierkegaard the authentic person is called "The Individual." Kierkegaard dedicated his works to "The Individual," wished "The Individual" to be inscribed on his tomb, declared that "The Individual" was the category through which man in the course of his history was destined to pass. "The crowd" was "the lie." "To exist" was "to stand out" from the crowd, whether the crowd of conforming Christians whose Christianity was essentially "geographical," or the crowd of "dons," meekly and faithfully expounding the Hegelian System. "To exist" one must "choose oneself" or "choose to choose." "Existence" was founded in the first place on a fundamental ethical choice, on a decision on the ideal for which one was prepared to live or die, though as personality is a continuing revelation, and authentic persons are continually engaged in making and re-making themselves, the act of choice has continually to be repeated so that to pass through periodical crises of decision, in particular through a capacity to open oneself to grace, is the clearest indication of the authentic. "Subjectivity is truth" declared Kierkegaard; he poured ridicule on the idea that truth could be handed by one person to another as a body of results; it must spring from experience "indivi-

dually appropriated." Kierkegaard's hostility to Hegel was to his conception of truth as an elaborate speculative system claiming objective validity. If a complete system of truth could be produced by the mere exercise of dialectics, there was nothing left for man to do when he had acquired it by the necessary intellectual effort; no living and developing relationship to God, to himself, to other persons or to his social situation was called for. "Man cannot live in these enormous systematic buildings," Kierkegaard remarked. The truth that really mattered was the fruit of the choices, the discoveries, the adventures, the inspirations of unique persons relating themselves to situations no less unique.

While the most crucial of Kierkegaard's decisions was his rejection of speculation for Christianity, Nietzsche was an atheist, yet there is a marked similarity between their basic positions. Nietzsche's attack on Christianity as "slave morality" is parallel to the war on Christendom which occupied Kierkegaard's last years. Kierkegaard saw history as moving into the category of "the individual"; Nietzsche regarded the vision that came to him of mankind passing away from the stage of customary morality, in which no clear distinction was made between the "free" and the "evil," to a stage "beyond good and evil," as these had been previously understood, as dividing history into two halves. The work of his middle period was a thoroughgoing critical analysis, mainly in aphoristic form, of the entire body of traditional ethical and religious conceptions. Kierkegaard disavowed any intention to form a school; it was precisely the persons who evaded the responsibility of personal decision by attaching themselves to a school whom he condemned for inauthenticity. Zarathustra, similarly, dismissed his followers to express his contempt for men unable to stand by themselves.

The conception of "anguish" in the existentialists is closely related to that of "authenticity." Kierkegaard knew from his deeply troubled experience that the man who embarks on a life of "authentic" decisions has at the same time left behind him clear and straightforward courses. The conception of "anguish" in the thought of Heidegger and Sartre is similarly associated with their doctrine of authenticity. In their view man finds himself "thrown" into existence, just like that; he does not know why, nor can he ever know why. He is *de trop*. He finds himself in the middle of a fool's journey, travelling without pilot or compass. He will never find any meaning in life except what he himself is able to put into it. Also, he is condemned to be free. He must make some kind of choice as to how he shall live his life. His easiest course, for there is always a powerful pressure on him to follow it, is that of conformity to established usages and opinions, of being assimilated to the general forms of human existence. By this means he becomes "one among

many," he achieves anonymity, he becomes buried in the impersonal *Das Man*. Life becomes easy, but at the expense of a flight from personal responsibility, the escape into inauthenticity. Sartre applies the opprobrious epithet "salaud" to the person who thus sacrifices the world of his possibilities, however characterized by "anguish," to the craving for security. What is the position of the man who chooses to be "authentic"? He has personally to confront his situation, to assume the responsibility for giving meaning to life in that situation. It is a situation in which he cannot escape a certain servitude both to his own material necessities and to other persons. Both Heidegger and Sartre, but more particularly Sartre, interpret man's relationship to other persons in terms of servitude. The other is always the person who regards me as an object so that I fall into the category of "being-for-another person" instead of "being-for-oneself." The source of original sin, Sartre tells us, is the existence of others; most people become the "for-another person" type and sink into inauthenticity. Yet salvation is to be found in this situation, Heidegger and Sartre tell us, by a full acceptance of one's responsibility and a genuine confrontation of reality. One has to recognize that one's situation is inescapably, in Heidegger's phrase, "Being-with-others-in-the-world"; one must realize, Sartre tells us, that there is no escape, without manifest evasion, from taking responsibility for the whole world seeing that whatever one does affects the whole world. Man loses his sense of servitude to other persons if, having been awakened to his human condition, he assumes it, accepts total responsibility for it and engages himself unreservedly in it. Heidegger posits a similarly heroic morality. Man has to face the absurdity of his existence, that he is cast into the world merely to die there, that when he has thrown away the comfort of established ideas, he is left with Nothing, so that he has to build his own world of meaning by his choices. But if he escapes from illusions, making a full-blooded acceptance of what existence implies, taking charge of his destiny, he finds a world of almost boundless possibilities open to him, though, as he has always to confront a given situation, his freedom is always limited, authentic existence being necessarily a synthesis of the imposed and the willed. Such an existence, Heidegger tells us, is the only possible one for the enlightened and resolved human being.

Karl Jaspers' contribution to an "authentic" ethic seems to me of particular interest. He admits, in the first place, the great debt that he owes to Kierkegaard and Nietzsche and begins his analysis of the human situation where they left off. In his opinion they effectively shattered the framework both of traditional philosophy and of ethics, and made it necessary to make a fresh start. Jaspers finds the complacency of modern man in face of the collapse of

traditional religious beliefs and of any true basis for social cohesion a terrifying fact. The truth is that a transformation of man's ethical and religious beliefs no less radical than the change that is taking place in objective living conditions may be a condition of survival. Jaspers remarks that the doctrine of authenticity taught by Kierkegaard and Nietzsche provides rather the conditions for arriving at a solution of the problem than the solution itself. Kierkegaard and Nietzsche are "exceptions"; they must not be regarded as exemplars. In Jaspers' view the solution Kierkegaard found for himself, his acceptance of Christianity through the leap of faith, through The Absurd, is one in which we cannot follow him. But Nietzsche has even less claim to have shown us the way out. Mr. Blackman sagely remarks that only the most foolish of his followers have attempted to occupy any of the intellectual homes he built for himself in his last years. Jaspers has sought to build a philosophy for modern man and for modern society in terms of the principle of authenticity. He discusses the nature of a right relationship to tradition, one by which man makes sure he is not cut off from his roots and yet does not slavishly follow the past; of an authentic relationship to customary values, one through which, if a man does not merely conform, but adopts traditional values, if he does adopt them, by an act of choice, he nevertheless takes care not merely to pass them by. Finally, he discusses the problem of man in society, of how a consensus can be created for social living by other means than the pressure of a depersonalizing social structure which imposes a rigid thought and behaviour pattern. He finds the key to this problem in communication, remarking that the true spirit of reason in our time becomes the desire for boundless communication. Jaspers remarks, "Boundless openness to communication is not the consequence of any knowledge, it is the decision to follow a human road. The idea of communication is not utopia, but faith. Each man is confronted with the question whether he believes in our potentiality really to live together, to speak together, through this togetherness to find our way to the truth, and thereby finally to become authentically ourselves."

I have given this prominence to the examination by the existentialists of the problem of authenticity because their central philosophical doctrines will be found to follow from it. They have rejected both of the main philosophical positions which have dominated thought through the period since the age of scholasticism and which we can describe as idealism or rationalism, on the one hand, and empiricism or naturalism on the other. Kierkegaard's onslaught on Hegel, in which he was followed by Nietzsche, was decisive. Since Kierkegaard it has no longer been possible for the philosopher to imagine that he can erect a totalitarian explanation of the universe

by the mere exercise of the speculative reason. Existentialism, it should be added, is not an irrationalism. There have been few more skilful or subtle dialecticians than Kierkegaard; he was in no sense concerned to undervalue the part that must be played in philosophy by the rigour of thought and the cogency of disciplined reflection. But the thought must always be the thought of the existing person and be related to his interests and choices. The world of concrete existences cannot on this view be fitted into a merely conceptual framework. Philosophical doctrines must take full account of the bewildering complexity of the experience of existents in its concreteness and multiform modes. Compared with the interpretations of the existentialists the idealist systems of such thinkers as Leibnitz, Spinoza and Hegel seem to have little relation with life as it is lived.

What is the precise point on which the existentialists base their criticism of scientism, of the positivism or common-sense empiricism of the British school in particular? It is not a question of any hostility to science. The existentialists are at one with the empiricists as against the idealists in their recognition of the importance of brute fact, of the formal emptiness of systems in which there is not a continual checking of speculation by fact. Jaspers has remarked that it is hardly possible to exaggerate the significance of that really unlimited inquiry, accompanied by boundless self-criticism, which is the essence of science. Whatever is manifested in the world science can take as its object, our consciousness of every reality thus becoming sharpened and clarified. Philosophy must take into account the whole body of verified knowledge that science provides. But, the existentialists claim, science is concerned with only one aspect of the world, the world in its objectivity, what Jaspers calls "Being-there" and Sartre *l'en-soi*. But the world of personal existences, which is also the world of ethical and aesthetic valuations, is a different kind of world, a world which cannot be known truly by being either observed objectively or studied analytically, after the manner of science, but must be discovered by participation in its life. The primary subject-matter of the existentialists is personal existence and its ethical interests. Now it is precisely in this field that science, whether proceeding by detached observation or reductive analysis, gives such unsatisfactory results. A person, Heidegger and Sartre tell us, is a No-Thing; it is not a fact that can be placed before us for scientific scrutiny, but a possibility, an entity that makes and re-makes itself by its projects and valuations. Kierkegaard, referring to the growing preoccupation with science that characterized his time, remarked that the person absorbed in the discovery of fact usually forgot what it meant to "exist." The "existing" person was concerned with giving meaning to every part

of his life by his decisions in the field of his relation to God, to himself, to other persons and to political society; the scientific observer tended to be dissociated from that life of drama and decision, of love and beauty, by his preoccupation with the process of splitting up into its parts some item of the rich and varied and exciting world of concrete existences. Jaspers argues that Being reveals itself to us in various aspects or modes which are basically discontinuous and cannot be fitted into any unified scheme. If the idealists seek to fit the real into a conceptual scheme, the empiricists attempt to fit it into a framework of objectively observed fact. Both methods fail to imprison in their net the world of existence.

In his *The Perennial in Philosophy* Jaspers has made a vigorous attack on the merely empirical approach. He argues that its direct and indirect ethical fruits are disastrous, while its method of isolating and positing and absolutizing some particular phenomenal aspect of the real prevents it from grasping the real. He maintains that it is illustrative of the basic contradiction involved in empiricism that the British logical positivist school, which claims to be in principle empirical, has found itself in practice preoccupied with merely formal and logical problems.

It is noteworthy that such positivists as Russell and Ayer have by implication admitted the limitations of positivism in relation to the problems of ethics and aesthetics. Russell has argued that personal valuations do not belong to the realm of knowledge, that neither science nor philosophy can throw any light on their validity. Ayer denies indeed that ethical statements are meaningful propositions seeing that there is no way of discovering whether they are true or false. This drastic step of eliminating ethics and wisdom from the sphere of philosophy the existentialists have refused to take. It seems to them that any philosophical method which leads to such consequences is self-condemned.

The earliest of the existentialists, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, were inspirational thinkers rather than systematic philosophers. The later exponents, notably Heidegger and Jaspers, who have occupied professorial posts and present existentialism in terms of the philosophy of the schools, have been influenced by the phenomenology of Husserl. They have been concerned with phenomena, with the concrete forms of consciousness, seeing that "things in themselves cannot be known," but their special preoccupation has been with the capacity of consciousness to intuit meanings and essences. If, then, existentialism studies concrete existences, it is always from the point of view of the meaning of the experiences which are examined. Thus its attention is mainly directed to modes of consciousness and situations which have some particular significance. There is the situation of "anguish" which receives a variety

of interpretations; it refers in general to man's doubt and uncertainty, often of an agonizing kind, when he feels no longer able to take refuge in the inauthentic and yet realizes that all safe ground has been taken from under his feet. There is the situation of solitariness in which man, awakened for the first time to a consciousness of his situation, realizes the difficulties, in some respects insuperable, of communication. The existentialists have given especial attention to the problem of the relation between the human person and "the other." While Sartre has regarded personal relationships as basically relationships of servitude, in other thinkers of the school they are seen as the source of the chief meaning and greatest fulfilment of existence. Jaspers and Buber interpret the primary ethical problem in terms of the relationship between the "I" and "Thou"; the "I" must fully recognize the "otherness" of the "other," that he is both essentially different and fundamentally inaccessible, and yet must feel a "call" to the life of community through openness, generosity and communication, which must always be sought without being ever fully achieved. Marcel has shown profound insight in his analysis of the relationship of fidelity. Man's relationship to Being or Transcendence or God is a central *motif* of the existentialists, especially in the case of Kierkegaard, Jaspers, Heidegger and Marcel. Hence the part played in their thought of the concepts of revelation and testimony and the distinction made by Marcel between a Problem and a Mystery. When one encounters a problem, all the factors of the situation are known and there is no reason why every competent investigator should not reach the same solution. In all the significant situations in life, in Marcel's view, we are involved in Mysteries not problems, for there are factors involved deriving in part from the fact that we are participants and not mere observers and in part from our relationship to Being, that "metaphysical Atlantis whose presence in reality confers on our experience its volume, its value, its mysterious density." The existentialist philosopher is bound to find himself interpreting these and other basic human situations in terms of his own experience; in his view philosophy can only attain complete objectivity by losing significance and the sense of existence. Yet he has to relate himself to the world, and we all live in the same world, so that where his experience is authentic he can speak to our condition unless we have sought an escape in the inauthentic, or he may call us into existence. It is not his business to provide his reader with objective truth but to call him to responsible living so that he will learn to build a structure of thought and value for himself.

Mr. Blackham remarks in his very sage and able work that perhaps the time has not come when it is possible to take a judicial view of the existentialists and so determine their place in the development

of thought. It may indeed be true that all that most of us can hope to do at the present stage is to attempt individually to appropriate, to use a Kierkegaardian phrase, what they have to give us. But I should like in conclusion to make three general comments.

(1) It seems to me that it cannot but be salutary for thinkers trained in the British school of philosophy to attempt genuinely to confront the challenge of the existentialists. I have an impression that the school of logical analysis is reaching or has reached a dead end. The game of classifying propositions in terms of their logical content, of hunting out unnecessary categories by Occam's razor, of exposing the "nonsensicality" of metaphysical sentences, is not unlimited in its possibilities and, after a time, assumes a certain air of futility. It is easy to over-estimate what can be achieved by formal logic. Collingwood remarked that nothing was ever demonstrated by logistics that could not be proved just as well without it. The entire structure of symbolic and mathematical logic, as we have seen, tells us nothing whatever about the world of experience. The long enterprise of seeking to demonstrate by logical method the validity of science is losing something of its fascination. Dr. J. O. Wisdom has surely said the last word on this when he points out that scientific investigation is not in fact based on induction but on the hypothetico-deductive method, and that one's belief in the validity of the latter depends entirely on whether the assumption is justified, which in fact scientists make, that we live in a rational universe that is favourable to scientific procedure. Some of the positivists are indeed realizing that there are new and worthwhile tasks to engage them if they can get out of their present rut. More contact with and understanding of the existentialists might hasten the process.

Russell has persuaded the positivists to believe that wisdom is not their province, that philosophy should restrict itself to the problems of logic and epistemology. Russell remarked that the philosophers who believed it was their task to teach wisdom and promote the necessary minimum of good behaviour sacrificed truth to propaganda and became lost in mists of fallacy and obscurity. That seems to be a case for attacking their fallacies and obscurities but not for depriving philosophy of its richest province. It is time that British philosophers followed the existentialists in concerning themselves with what Mr. Blackham calls "personal existence and its ethical interests."

(2) I attach great importance to the unanimous testimony of the existentialists to the value of what they call authentic existence or authentic personality. Throughout human history till our own time the lived morality of the masses of people, including those who are widely accepted as *good*, has been essentially mores, the customs of

some particular social group. The existentialists hold that the age of The Individual has arrived, of what personalists call the "person," the age in which it will be recognized that the significance of personal life depends on a refusal merely to conform to the mores of the group. My own view is that men's chances of survival depend on the extent to which they can transcend the morality of custom and transform themselves into persons. If this is true, existentialists and personalists are prophetic thinkers in a highly significant sense.

(3) My final point is that those of us who have been influenced by the existentialists must not forget perhaps the most important thing they have to teach, that existentialism is not a body of "results" we are supposed to accept. Every existentialist philosophy is necessarily a personal interpretation; it is limited by the limitations of its author; if the quality of his experience is not on a high level, his thought will display his mediocrity; if he is lacking in wisdom, his interpretations will record his folly; if he is a neurotic, his failures of adjustment will be manifest. Kierkegaard and Nietzsche were neurotics; if much of their thought is of great value, much of it is repellent. Jaspers and Buber are the wisest of the existentialists, Berdyaev the most inspiring and prophetic. I find Marcel's practice of leaving his arguments suspended in the air profoundly irritating; merely to see "*le penseur pensant*" at work is not sufficient for me. Jaspers has told us not to regard Kierkegaard and Nietzsche as exemplars; the remark should apply to the whole existentialist school. Let us not follow any of them but, nevetheless, learn from them to relate ourselves authentically as unique persons to situations equally unique.

A. N. WHITEHEAD ON GOOD AND EVIL

Professor R. K. HARRISON

The many comments on good and evil found in the writings of A. N. Whitehead are exhibited in his mind against the two categories of positive and negative value. His concern in value-considerations is with the "trinity" of truth, beauty and goodness on the one hand, and with falsehood, ugliness and evil on the other.[1] For him, "value" is a word employed for "the intrinsic reality of an event"[2] and very frequently in his treatment of the value-theme he uses the term "importance" as having equivalence to "value."[3]

Reality for him consists of a systematized accumulation of what he designates as "actual entities," or "actual occasions," which, he states, are "the final real things of which the world is made up."[4] An actual entity corresponds to a "subject" or "self," which is so constituted as to be able to express the data-products of other actual entities.[5] For the purposes of this paper it will be necessary to consider what Whitehead describes as "eternal objects," or general possibilities, since these categories have an integral relationship to good and evil in his philosophical system.

An "eternal object" is defined as "any entity whose conceptual recognition does not involve a necessary reference to any definite actual entities of the temporal world."[6] One of their most important properties is the relational essence which they exhibit, and an eternal object can never properly be considered apart from its relations to other eternal objects. Such an object would be "redness," "man," "good" as simple quantities, whilst a complex eternal object would exhibit simple eternal objects in specific relations, or in his own words it would be a "definite finite relationship involving the definite eternal objects of a limited set of such objects."[7] Now these eternal objects exercise an important influence over actual entities in the sense that they act as guiding ideals which very generally direct the process of experience of an actual entity, but this happens only because an actual entity uses them for that specific purpose. For example, they govern the consideration and absorption of a datum (positive prehension), within the experience of an actual occasion, or its examination and rejection (negative prehension), and so assist the actual entity to realize the ideal concept (or eternal object) within

1 *Adventures of Ideas* (1933), p. 11.
2 *Science and the Modern World* (1929), p. 136.
3 *Aims of Education* (1929), p. 63.
4 *Process and Reality* (1929), p. 27.
5 Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 337 ff.
6 *Ibid.*, p. 70.
7 *Science and the Modern World*, p. 239.

its experience. So then every actual entity can be regarded as exhibiting value, whether positive or negative, although it may only have a potential form until the abstract eternal object is realized as constituting actual values for it. But this fruition of value rests upon the comprehensive operation of what Whitehead calls the subjective aim[1] of an actual entity (i.e., the guidance by the ideal or eternal object), and not only on one phase of that activity.

We can now examine the relation of the human mind, which in itself is a society of actual entities, to the existence and recognition of eternal objects. Whitehead claims that the mind is so constituted as to be able to realize conceptually certain abstract categories which upon subsequent and more detailed examination prove to be consistent with their preconceived attributes. "The human intelligence can conceive of a type of things in abstraction from exemplification. The most obvious disclosures of this characteristic of humanity are mathematical concepts and ideals of the Good."[2] Good can be claimed as realized within experience when an actual entity succeeds in exemplifying the eternal object "good." Just how completely or appositely such a realization is likely to be effected is a matter upon which Whitehead finds it difficult to be specific. Probably he would maintain that absolute exemplification does not fall within the common run of experience of actual entities.

Having indicated the ability of the human mind to conceive such abstract quantities as the "good," Whitehead then proceeds to describe the manner in which the eternal object "good" is in fact achieved. In this process the element of pattern plays an important part. This is not of a purely mechanical or functional order, but seems to reflect the mathematical background of the philosopher, and his desire to stress the fact of order and harmony in the general concept. This incidence of pattern is a necessary prerequisite for the attaining of the "good," though the pattern itself is a neutral specificant, or in his own words, "in itself a pattern is neither good nor bad."[3] Uniformity is not necessarily characteristic of such a state of affairs, for the existence of an element diverse from that of the "good" may be integral to the nature of the eternal object. As with the eternal object "beauty," which may exhibit certain necessary characters of discord,[4] so "good" as an analogous category may likewise contain certain disorder, and even an actual quantity of evil. Whilst the "right chaos and the right vagueness are jointly required for any effective harmony," yet "chaos is not to be identified with evil."[5] The conditions which Whitehead maintains as necessary for

[1] *Vide Process and Reality*, pp. 37 f.

[2] *Mathematics and the Good.* (*The Philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead.* Ed. Schilpp.), pp. 672 f.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 679.

[4] *Adventures of Ideas*, p. 3.

[5] *Process and Reality*, p. 171.

Good to be realized are the "infusion of pattern into natural occurrences, and the stability of such patterns, and the modification of such patterns."[1] Unfortunately he does not deal with the specific varieties of patterns, but merely assumes that they exist, and presumably that changes or rearrangements of pattern will in some way exemplify the eternal object "good." From the standpoint of humanity, the capacity of the mind is apparently such that the individual concerned is able to prehend positively those particular patterns which will assist in the ultimate exemplification of the eternal object "good."

Professor Whitehead cautions us against a facile acceptance of the idea that the "good" is a "stationary" concept. Though the eternal object "good" is unchanging, particular situations may exemplify it at one time and not at another, and it must also be borne in mind that new exemplifications are constantly occurring. It must be noted that his whole philosophy of "novelty" and "adventure" has always in view the distinctively progressive element, for without it "life degenerates when enclosed within the shackles of mere conformation."[2] In his book *Religion in the Making*, he vigorously attacks the concept of static goodness, with all that it implies in the way of smugness and self-satisfaction. "Good people of narrow sympathies are apt to be unfeeling and unprogressive, enjoying their egotistical goodness . . . they have reached a state of stable goodness so far as their interior life is concerned. This type of moral correctitude is, on a larger view, so like evil that the distinction is trivial."[3] The close connection between good and evil which is possible, as evidenced in the foregoing quotation, may lead us to examine their relationship somewhat more closely, and also the general nature of evil itself. We have already been prepared for considerable intimacy of relation by Whitehead's assertion that evil—or in a reduced form, disorder, which he associated with the "Bad"[4]—may be an integral part of the eternal object "good." It would appear that in his philosophical thought, goodness and badness have a fundamental bearing on the structure of the cosmos. "Specific goods and specific evils may fade from experience, but goodness and badness are inescapable elements in all experience."[5]

With regard to the nature of evil, Whitehead makes a careful analysis of the situation which culminates in the enumeration of several distinct types. We have already noticed the "evil of triviality"[6] which exhibits evil as the "half-way house between perfection and triviality"[7] itself. Where patterns block each other there is the

[1] *Mathematics and the Good*, p. 678. [2] *Modes of Thought* (1938), p. 109.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 98. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 108.
[5] A. H. Johnson, *Philosophy of Science*, II, No. 1 (1944), p. 23.
[6] *Mathematics and the Good*, p. 679. [7] *Adventure of Ideas*, p. 355.

"intrinsic evil of active deprivation" in the experience of an actual entity, and this evil may be subdivided into three types: "a concept may conflict with a reality, or two realities may conflict, or two concepts may conflict."[1] Further, there is the more obvious variety of evil with which we are familiar as the "brute motive force of fragmentary purpose, disregarding the eternal wisdom. Evil is overruling, retarding, hurting."[2]

Where the pattern of evil exemplifies its nature as a norm, it has the character of a "good," judged by its own standards. Beyond this it becomes an evil to itself, as well as to things outside itself, and thus contains the elements of its own destruction. For this reason Whitehead insists that the nature of evil is one of essential instability.[3] Regarding pain and suffering, he maintains that its activity can produce a state of mind which will not merely transcend it, but ignore its functioning altogether.

The relationship of God to good and evil may merit brief consideration at this juncture. The relation of God to "eternal objects" is one of considerable complexity. His "primordial nature," which is comprised of various conceptual prehensions, is expressed in the principle of concretion, whereby God arranges the eternal objects and makes them available for prehension by actual entities.[4] This function on the part of God is what Whitehead calls the "ultimate irrationality," a basic fact of the universe which must be accepted unquestioningly. His "consequent nature" or the "physical prehension by God of the actualities of the evolving universe" implies that God may be developing continually by virtue of His imbibing some of the many experiences of the actual entities. Within this area may be seen the place of evil in the Divine nature, and Whitehead states explicitly that evil does in fact have a definite place within the experience of God, albeit speaking of the "overcoming of evil by good" and "the transmutation of evil into good"[5] in the sense of contributing to good. This shows the subordinate position of evil to good in the nature of God.

Thus his formulation of the matter is as follows. "God has in his nature the knowledge of evil, of pain, and of degradation, but it is there as overcome with what is good. Every fact is what it is, a fact of pleasure, of joy, of pain or of suffering. In its union with God that fact is not a total loss, but on its finer side is an element to be woven immortally into the rhythm of mortal things. Its very evil becomes a stepping-stone in the all-embracing ideals of God."[6]

[1] *Immortality* (Whitehead in Schilpp. ed.), pp. 686 f.
[2] *Science and the Modern World*, p. 276.
[3] Cf. *Religion in the Making*, pp. 97 f.
[4] *Process and Reality*, p. 134 *passim*.
[5] *Religion in the Making*, p. 155.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 156.

The position which Whitehead adopts on this question of good and evil calls for some discussion. In the first place, it is not at all clear as to what he understands by the use of the term "good." It is clearly an eternal object, but are we to infer from this that it has a nature uniform with others of its kind, and in any case, what is the special characteristic which may be taken as distinguishing it, and making it recognizable and desirable for what it is? We are assured that the good arises as the result of patterns which exhibit variations. But how, we may ask, do these patterns arise, and how do they fall within the discernment of actual entities? To imply that the type of pattern which brings the achievement of goodness within reach is the variety which exemplifies the eternal object "good" tells us very little about the specific breakdown of the pattern, and comes dangerously near a tautology. Is it necessary, we may ask, that the good should exhibit pattern? May it not rather be found in a "simple" or "naïve" form, without reference to functional arrangement? Whitehead does not offer any cogent proof of his assertion, and so it must remain an open question for the present. Nor does he seem to take adequate cognizance of the possibility of degrees or grades of goodness, and this is rather important in view of the fact that he waxes wroth on "static goodness." Is goodness for him a concept which is apprehended in totality and final form as a result of prehension by an actual entity, or is the experience gradual and sustained as a result of continuation? If God is capable of developing by prehension, then perhaps the same may be said of "good" also.

Whitehead claims that exactness of achievement of the "good" is impossible at the present, but since he does no more than generalize upon the conditions which might be regarded as ideal for its fruition, one is left wondering whether such a realization can ever become part of the experience of an actual entity. Until positive variations and pattern-forms are specified, instead of the vague references to "modification" and "stability," his treatment of the situation leading to the actualization of the "good" can have little concrete meaning. But perhaps we ought not to expect too much in view of the fact that his method of investigation as a whole consists in a generalized description of what he has found to be the case from experience.[1]

Again, is it not a rather gratuitous assumption on the part of Whitehead that the human intelligence is so constituted that it is able to conceive abstractly certain types of eternal objects? For the majority of people the cognizance of such things as good and evil, to limit our choice to the considerations of this paper, are elements which the intelligence lays hold on through personal experience, with its corresponding rewards and chastisements, and are seldom conceptualized in abstract form. We may, further, "feel in our bones"

[1] *Process and Reality*, pp. 19 ff.

that an ideal of goodness exists, and we may even align that ideal to the concept of "God"—though Whitehead probably would not—but its experience in the living of most people is of a very rudimentary order, and is never actualized either by mystic or by naturalist. Our concepts of "good" and "evil" are acquired against the background of society, for without this factor they would be powerless. So these eternal objects appear to us largely as the result of our social training, and less as the fruit of abstract contemplation by human intelligence.

Whitehead apparently attributes a complex nature to "good" when he speaks of it exhibiting elements of disorder and even evil. This is at once an interesting and involved speculation. He does not explain the proportion of evil which may be compatible with the good, in that eternal object, nor does he show the manner in which evil arrives in the pattern as a whole. This leads to another important question. If "evil" is a recognized part of the eternal object "good," can the reverse situation be maintained? If this is possible—and Whitehead's system appears to leave room for such a contingency—then the terms "good" and "evil," along with many others, are merely relative in their description of eternal objects, and tell us nothing of significance about the nature, and especially the constitution of the categories under consideration. Thus, as ideals for the guidance of actual entities, they are apt to become somewhat confusing on examination, to say the least of it. One rather feels that there lurks in the remote background of Whitehead's mind something of the spirit of Heraclitus—and Hegel—as exemplified in the "law of complementary opposition" or the "cosmic tensions" of which he wrote.

It would appear, then, that the recognition of the eternal objects "good" and "evil" for what they are as patterns of functioning is by no means as easy a matter as might appear at first sight. In fact, one can hardly help wondering as to exactly how far an actual entity has any real cognizance of their nature as it actually is. The possibility then arises of one pattern being exemplified in experience in mistake for the other. This is by no means a remote possibility, since "evil" exhibits its own harmony and pattern just as "good" does. Presumably the only certain way of apprehension is by means of "intuition," which itself would, in certain philosophical quarters, be construed as an appeal to ignorance.

One must comment favourably upon the discernment which Professor Whitehead evidences in his remarks on the place of evil in the nature of God. The reality of evil is, of course, fully recognized, but Whitehead is careful not to overstate its importance, or unduly exalt its position in the scheme of things. It is a part of the cosmic pattern, not the whole of it, and whilst its experience is credited, it is

thought of as operative in a subordinate capacity, and as integrated to the formulation of ultimate harmony, to which it is a contributing and necessary factor. Whitehead's entire analysis of the eternal object "evil" is very penetrating and satisfactory, and it is unfortunate that, to the present writer, the same clarity of exposition has not been applied to a description of the eternal object "good."

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IMAGES, SUPPOSING, AND IMAGINING

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[I should like to acknowledge my gratitude to A. G. N. Flew for his frequent discussions on the subject of this paper and for his criticisms of the paper itself; he is largely responsible for any merits it may have.]

In this paper I shall do three things. *Firstly*, I shall distinguish between three senses of "imagine": one in which (the context makes clear that) the word is used to report the occurrence of mental imagery; a second in which "imagined" is used as substantially equivalent to "thought"; and a third in which "imagine" is used as substantially equivalent to "suppose." (And I shall argue that in neither of the two latter senses does imagining necessarily involve imagery.) *Secondly*, I shall discuss Hume's thesis about imagination: both because, although this is set out as a plausible (but mistaken) generalization about psychology, it nevertheless seems to me that Hume dealt with a central philosophical problem concerning imagination—the relation of descriptions to imagery—in a way that is suggestive and fruitful; and—the main reason for mentioning Hume—because a study of the relation between imagining (when this is imaging) and imagining (when this is supposing) will help us to reinterpret his thesis from a mistaken one about psychology into a correct one about logic and language. *Thirdly*, I shall give the central arguments and the conclusion of the chapter on Imagination in *The Concept of Mind*, and comment on them. Although Ryle is correct in saying that imagining—or at least imagining (supposing)—is in some sense—a sense we shall try to elucidate—a sophisticated process, and requires that we should have learnt and not forgotten a language; yet I want to show that the arguments by which he reaches this conclusion are unsatisfactory. Though comprehensive, they are crude; and on the way he manages to conceal the case of imagining (imaging). And thus he is precluded from applying his conclusion that imagination is a sophisticated process to the problems of the description of mental imagery. But, as I will show, this is precisely where we should apply the conclusion.

(1) In any discussion of imagination, attention tends to centre on mental imagery. This is unfortunate. For though I may always have a mental image of my father jumping a five-barred gate, to imagine something it is not necessary to have an image. "Imagine what would happen if your father jumped the gate at his age": I require no mental picture to make me reply "No, certainly he mustn't do it"; though I may as a matter of fact have (had) an image. This command ("Imagine what would happen if . . .") resembles one "Just suppose

he were to do it" or even "Think of what would happen if . . ." In certain uses "suppose" and "imagine" are interchangeable. Furthermore, a good many metaphors about picturing and pictures are in fact used without entailing that anyone has an image. I can try to put someone in the picture about the American constitution, without necessarily being concerned to induce imagery in his unimaginative mind. (And this in spite of the fact that mental or physical pictures may help one to teach or learn a subject. The main difference between the two *kinds* of picture here being that mental ones are of less use for the purpose than physical ones: it is easy to present the pupil with a chart, and say "*this* is how the U.S. Constitution works"; but one has to describe a mental picture, and make oneself understood, before one can even begin to use it in communication. Precisely because mental pictures are private to one, whereas physical pictures are public to all.) Again, I can say that I had a different picture of rock-climbing before I began to climb: but this may only mean that I didn't know it rained all the time; it does not necessarily involve my ever having had a mental image of rope work on Clogwyn dúr Arddhu.

So far I have dealt with two senses of "imagine": one, that in which "to imagine" means "to have a mental picture"—which I call the "imaging" sense (for example, "I'm imagining what it will look like when it is erected").[1] The other, that in which "imagine p" means the same as "suppose p"—which I shall call the "propositional entertainment" sense, and where the verb is usually in the imperative (for example: "Imagine what would have happened if we had not had the Spitfire"). There remains the third sense of "to imagine," where if I say (usually in a past tense) "I imagined p" this implies that I am now at least doubtful whether p is the case, or know that it is not the case. (For example: "I imagined that they were relying on some secret guarantees.") I shall call this the "(perhaps mistaken) thinking" sense. These three senses are radically different, and demand individual attention. If we assume that "imaging" is equivalent to "propositional entertainment" we get at the beginning to where Professor Ryle takes us at the end; that is, we find we have joined him in an effort to hush up the scandal of the occurrence of mental imagery. It may be possible to produce yet further senses of "imagine," and would certainly be possible further to subdivide the senses we already have: but for the purposes of this paper it is sufficient to distinguish these three major senses; noting in passing that the sense of the formations "imagination" and "imaginative" is not uniquely derived from "imagine" in any one of these senses.

[1] The context does not by any means invariably make it clear and certain whether or not "imagine" is being used in this sense; which entails the occurrence of imagery.

(2) Now for Hume. In the *first* place he ignored the possibility of our imagining (supposing) anything without an accompanying image. (And, for that matter, he also ignored the possibility of our imagining [perhaps mistakenly thinking] anything without imagery.) In the *second* place, he held that we could not imagine anything that we had not previously experienced wholly or in part; ". . . All simple ideas and impressions resemble each other; and as the complex are formed from them, we may affirm in general, that these two species of perception are exactly correspondent" (*T.H.N.*, *Everyman*, vol. i, p. 13, para. 3). The exception to this rule lay in the case of the man who could imagine a shade of blue that he had never met before, when presented with a colour card in which this shade was missing from the scale; but "the instance is so particular and singular, that it is scarce worth our observing, and does not merit that, for it alone, we should alter our general maxim" (*T.H.N.*, *Everyman*, vol. i, p. 15, para. 2). Hume presents his argument that images are the product of experience as a very safe empirical generalization. He says (*T.H.N.*, *Everyman*, vol. i, p. 14, last para.), ". . . whenever, by any accident, the faculties which give rise to any impressions are obstructed in their operations, as when one is born blind or deaf, not only the impressions are lost, but also their correspondent ideas, so that there never appear in the mind the least trace of either of them." Now there's no reason to suppose that he (or anyone else at that time) had done thorough research on this point.[1] But the fact that Hume is so certain that a blind man could have no idea of red, suggests that for him the whole matter is not simply one of empirical research; and though there is no passage where he says that it would be logically impossible for a blind man to describe his visual imagery in a public visual language which he himself understood; yet this is, I think, a legitimate reinterpretation to give to the passage I have quoted. (Though I do not say that this is what Hume *really* meant. Hume, being a competent prose writer and an honest man, really meant what he actually said—except when he was being ironical.) The last passage quoted from Hume at least suggests the following analysis: since we learn colour words by having coloured things pointed out to us, a man born blind could not have learnt to apply colour words. If he *claims* to have red images, we then reply "you *can't* know what 'red' means." Imagine that such a man gained sight; on looking at a scarlet pillar-box he comments "you know, all these years I have been having images of just that colour." Now this would be a very remarkable fact; and we might be very sceptical about it. In the present state of neurophysiology the only evidence that can be produced to prove it is the man's testimony

[1] William James quotes a man who had done such research. *Principles of Psychology*, vol. ii, p. 44.

after he has got sight, and learnt to recognize red in the normal way; and even if we were ready to admit (accepting his testimony or/and neurophysiological evidence) that, when blind, he had had images of the colour he now (rightly) calls red, yet there is no reason for us to say that he knew what the word "red" meant when he was blind—for then he had not learnt the word; it was pure coincidence he used it right. "Knowing" when you get the answer right by a fluke is not knowing.

There is throughout more to Hume's thesis than an unproven statement in psychology, an assertion of psychological incapacity; and this is most clearly seen if we substitute for what (with Hume was always) a case of imagining (imaging) another case—one of imagining (propositional entertainment). "Imagine such-and-such—that Britain had a closed economy." There is no suggestion here of a mental image, for whatever would a mental image of a closed economy be like? I need not have "taken a photograph" of the whole, or part, of the beast at any time; how indeed could I have done? Nor is there any reason for us to generalize about the psychology of the speaker, his ability or inability to form images. Yet we can (logically) only make an utterance of the form "Suppose p" *and understand it ourselves* if we already know how to use language correctly. Similarly, though I may have images which I can't describe, these are, like all images, necessarily private; (if they were not they would be not mental images but physical objects). If I am to describe mental images correctly, understanding what I am saying (and not just perhaps be right or intelligible by a fluke) I must be able to talk about them in public language. And to have learnt the language entails (in Ryle's words) "some perceiving." So Hume's insistence that before we could have a particular image (*idea*) we must necessarily have had particular experiences (*impressions*) can be reinterpreted into a thesis that to describe any (private) image with understanding we must have learnt and not forgotten (public) lessons in the use of the words in which we are to describe that image.

Hume's assumption that we cannot have images without a corresponding experience is attractive because, though imagery may well be "like nothing on earth," "like nothing I've met before," nevertheless we all somehow do think (by a sort of intuition of empiricism) that this *cannot* really be so, that somehow this imagery is a kaleidoscopic confusion of what we have seen and heard before. The difficulty here often is describing a situation which I seem to have no suitable words to describe: and this is a real difficulty. But we must not mistake its implications. For while we may have images which, with our present vocabulary, are indescribable, and while this would certainly tend, if anything, to disprove Hume's psychological thesis

about the necessary priority of impressions to their corresponding ideas: the contrary fact that in some particular case we can find words to describe an image (*idea*) does not necessarily prove that we have ever "experienced" an original which corresponds to it (have ever had a corresponding *impression*); nor yet that we must have had *impressions* corresponding to all the *parts* of that image (*idea*). It only proves that we must have had whatever *impressions* it was essential to have had in order to learn the meanings of the words used in our description.

To demonstrate the difficulty that often lies in finding words: in experiments with mescal the subject who has taken the drug has very vivid imagery, which he may be able to locate in space—e.g. "between me and the wall"—but which tends to be unlike anything seen before. In one experiment[1] an extended vocabulary was agreed on beforehand: by using a collection of reproductions of paintings by very different artists (e.g. Goya, Turner, Van Gogh, etc.) as reference points a new set of public analogies was made available both to the subjects and the experimenters. Clearly we may be able to describe our images more or less completely; Hume's man with the colour card could have done so pretty effectively and in precisely the way in which Hume has in fact contrived to explain to us the case he had in mind. The character in Wells who (most improbably) saw a new colour and called it "wing-colour" failed to make himself fully understood. He made himself partially understood by saying it was a new colour (and not a new sound); yet he could point to no specimens. A man who had (or has) a new sensation peculiar to himself would have (or has) even greater difficulties, for with sensation quality is all and that *ex hypothesi* he cannot indicate in anyone else.

Before going on to Ryle on Imagination, I want to make one further point. This is to underline the fallacy of treating a hypothetical capacity to imagine something as a proof that the description given to whatever it is that we do in fact see in our mind's eye, makes sense. Consider Schlick, who in the article "Meaning and Verification" (Feigl and Sellars, *Readings in Philosophical Analysis*, p. 159) says "I can easily imagine, e.g., witnessing the funeral of my own body and continuing to exist without a body, for nothing is easier than to describe a world which differs from our ordinary world only in the complete absence of all data which I would call parts of my own body. We must conclude that immortality . . . is an empirical hypothesis, because it possesses logical verifiability. It could be verified by following the prescription "Wait until you die!" But the fact that I can imagine (image) something which I am inclined to

[1] Now going on in Aberdeen: not yet published. Philosophers, psychiatrists and psychologists are co-operating.

describe as "witnessing my own funeral" doesn't in any way even tend to prove that immortality is an empirical hypothesis, if the description is not a proper and possible one. And until Schlick can prove that the description "I am witnessing my own funeral" *is* proper and possible (with no sniggering inverted commas round "my own funeral" as there were when Harry Lime reported that he had just witnessed "his own funeral") it is useless for him to try to induce images in an attempt to prove that the expression "I can see myself witnessing my own funeral" has sense. A picture (mental or physical: the only relevant difference is that the former is private and so of less use) may help someone to understand a sentence which describes that picture, and may even help him to see that a suggested description of it makes sense. But no picture can provide an argument that a doubtfully significant suggested description of itself does indeed make sense. And that is what is at stake here. (Surely Schlick has confused "Imagining—knowing what it would be like to be at Schlick's funeral" with "Imagining—knowing what it would be like for Schlick to be at Schlick's funeral." The former is straightforward, while the latter is perhaps a self-contradictory supposition.)[1]

(3) And so to Professor Ryle, who in his chapter on Imagination in *The Concept of Mind* mentions Hume in two contexts: firstly to say that he "notoriously thought there exist both impressions and ideas . . . and looked in vain for a clear boundary between the two sorts of perceptions" (p. 249); and secondly to say that he "put forward a causal theory that one could not have a particular 'idea' without having previously had the corresponding sensation, somewhat as having an angular bruise involves having been previously struck by an angular object" (p. 271). This is all; and after what I've said it's not surprising that I should think it unduly ungracious to Hume. But for the moment I will leave him out of it.

Ryle comes to deal with imagination hot from the battle about the status of minds; he is, then, primarily concerned to prove that images are not physical phenomena and so that they are nothing at all. He claims that the smile a child imagines on her doll's lips is not in fact on its lips; nor can it be unattached like the grin which survived the vanishing of the Cheshire Cat—so it is nowhere and nothing. We are told, in a paralysing broadside, that such a smile is not a physical phenomenon nor a non-physical phenomenon; though pictured it is not a picture, nor is it a real phantasm. "There is not a real life outside, shadowily mimicked by some bloodless likenesses inside; there are just things and events, and people fancying themselves witnessing things and events that they are not witnessing" (p. 249). I have moved at speed; but we now know Ryle claims that

[1] This paragraph is drawn from a forthcoming paper on "Is disembodied existence conceivable?" by A. G. N. Flew.

there are no such things as images (which is simply false); and that to imagine one sees or hears something is to fancy or suppose that one sees or hears it. (Which is perfectly true in one sense of "imagine": my [perhaps mistakenly] thinking sense.) There follows the first attack on Hume; if images are to be distinguished from sensations as less lively, this must mean either that they are less intense, or that they are less vivid and lifelike than sensations. Ryle makes two points in reply: (1) a sensation cannot be lifelike, any more than a real child as opposed to a doll can be life-like; while (2) an imagined noise is neither more nor less intense than a real one—it isn't a noise at all. His first point is sound and well taken. But the second is quite mistaken: for it is perfectly possible to confuse real and fancied noises; and we frequently do just this ("Was that the bell, or did I imagine it?"). Ryle's last negative contribution is to show that the ordinary use of "to imagine" doesn't describe a single, central activity; how absurd it would be to doubt whether a novelist was imaginative, on the ground that one didn't know what was in his mind's eye when he wrote. "There is no faculty of Imagination, occupying itself single-mindedly in fancied viewings and hearings. On the contrary, 'seeing' things is one exercise of imagination, growling somewhat like a bear is another; smelling things in the mind's nose is an uncommon act of fancy, malingering a very common one, and so forth" (p. 158). "The search after the unit is the delusion" (A. B. Johnson). The positive part of Ryle's argument begins with an analysis of the sophisticated operation of pretending—sophisticated in the sense that it is an operation which requires that we know what the original was like. To imagine that one sees x is logically equivalent to fancying one sees x, and fancying is a special case of pretending; here is the slippery slide. So imagining is a special case of pretending and is therefore a sophisticated process, too; we cannot make clear what we were imagining unless we know the language in which to express ourselves. "Seeing Helvellyn in one's mind's eye does not entail what seeing Helvellyn and seeing snapshots of Helvellyn entail, the having of visual sensations. It does involve the thought of having a view of Helvellyn and it is therefore a more sophisticated operation than that of having a view of Helvellyn. It is one utilization, among others, of the knowledge of how Helvellyn should look, or, in one sense of the verb, it is thinking how Helvellyn should look" (p. 270). And (p. 272) "we learn how things look and sound chiefly and originally by seeing and hearing them. Imagining, being one among many ways of utilizing knowledge, requires that the relevant knowledge should have been got and not lost. We no more need a paramechanical theory of how to account for our limited ability to see things in our mind's eye than we need it to account for our limited

ability to translate French into English. All that is required is to see that learning perceptual lessons entails some perceiving, that applying those lessons entails having learned them, and that imagining is one way of applying those lessons."

We seem to have got back to where we were after reinterpreting Hume; but Ryle's conclusion is too narrow to be at all satisfactory, and the arguments that get him there, though astoundingly comprehensive, are simply incorrect. The most important points to be made in reply are—Firstly, to conduct the discussion in terms of real and non-existent objects from the start is to stack the cards in Ryle's favour before the game begins. Instead we should insist that people do, in fact, have mental images. Then the thunderous attack—is an image a physical or non-physical phenomenon, a picture or a real phantasm?—simply passes us by. People do have images; and so why not talk about images? Secondly, we should resist the bullying about the location of an image. Ryle makes a psychological mistake when he says the imaginary smile is not (and we suppose never would be) on the doll's face. When imaging is involved, why shouldn't it be? To say that it is, does not involve treating the image smile as unattached, a smile without a face to smile it, like that of the Cheshire Cat. We can say that it is (apparently) located on the doll's face (or anywhere else; in mid-air for that matter); but it's not a smiling face but an image of a smiling face—so only the person who has it can see (have) it. The subjects in the mescal experiments could place their images even when they couldn't describe them; and I can say that I see a red patch between the door and the desk. (And incidentally this is one of the very few occasions when it is correct to say "I see—or better, I *can* see—a red patch"). Thirdly having insisted that people in fact have images we can then agree, with Ryle, that there is no nuclear process to imagining. Fourthly, we can add that, though the situation must remain confused until at least our three major senses of "imagine" are distinguished, still it is clearly wrong to pretend that imagery does not occur; just because we realize that its occurrence is, for purposes of communication, idle and supererogatory. Perhaps Ryle's extreme, mistaken, view has been adopted in reaction to Hume and others who made out that imagery was essential to significant communication; for when Ryle is not concerned—as he is in the chapter on Imagination in *The Concept of Mind*—to show that images are (at least in some ways) superfluous and idle, he does not adopt this ruthless attitude but admits that imagery does occur. On page 27 of *The Concept of Mind* he says "Much of our ordinary thinking is conducted in internal monologue or silent soliloquy, usually accompanied by an internal cinematograph show of visual imagery." That he should make his later strictures in spite of his earlier admission of the

obvious is, I think, evidence in favour of this suggestion. Perhaps the paradox of the denial of the occurrence of imagery is in part at least a misleading and unfortunate consequence of his systematic use of the material mode of speech. Compare, for example, what Mr. Heath says about his denial of volitions in "The appeal to ordinary language" (*Philosophical Quarterly*, January 1952, p. 4).

To conclude: in this paper I have tried *firstly* to distinguish between three senses of "imagine"—which I have called the imaging, propositional entertainment, and (perhaps mistaken) thinking senses. *Secondly*, I have used this distinction between imagining (in the sense of imaging) and imagining (in the sense of propositional entertainment) in order to treat Hume's thesis about imagination; and show that this can be reinterpreted from one about the physical capacity or incapacity of people to have images, to one that it is logically necessary to learn a public language before one can describe a private image. (Whether we can usually describe images satisfactorily is another matter; but the problem here is to find words in which to do so, and be intelligible.) I have also shown how irrelevant the question of capacity to have images is; when we are concerned with whether or not a putative description of what is imagined makes sense. (Here I gave the Schlick example.) *Finally*, I gave the main points from Ryle's treatment of Imagination. I said that it was mistaken to try to suppress the case of imaging, and suggested various reasons why Ryle should have wanted to do this; one of them might be the fact—which I hope this paper has served to bring out—that images are superfluous, and as it were idle, in communication.

DISCUSSIONS

I

JASPERS' CONCEPT OF TRANSCENDENCE (GOD) IN RECENT LITERATURE[1]

I propose to consider briefly some critical points that have been raised against Jaspers' concept of God as *the* reality, which can only announce itself, but never become object of thought, because it is impossible to reach the reality which is beyond all phenomenal thought. There remains only on Jaspers' premises the ever to be renewed movement towards the Transcendent, to be disclosed in the reading of the language of the cipher by which Transcendence is felt in this world but never made available as an object that can be laid hold of in its actual reality. This is the more significant because the demand for a transcendent supreme reality is justified, as its absolute character would be lost by descent into human thought, by the objectifying effort of which it would be coloured and conditioned. Since the realm of Transcendence is inexhaustible, the human mind at its farthest point of progress in knowledge must still see stretching away before it as its limiting condition, the region of the Unknown—the unfathomable depth of that Being of which any figurative or objectifying effort must be denied so as to keep its transcendent character pure. This is not, as the critics assume, to suspend the Transcendent in the air. It is rather meant to keep the movement towards the Transcendence going, and not to paralyse it into a possessive inactivity. That is why Jaspers developed, on the Kantian basis, his conception of a God not liable to the dangerous distortions of an anthropomorphism which have been prevalent throughout history. It was not merely that he found God to be indescribable in human speech, but also to transcend the utmost power of human thought. For this reason and on account of the failure of words or symbols, in which there is no longer anything corresponding in our imagination, many thinkers adhered to the theory of the negative attributes of God (according to which all affirmative statements about God are false). But that theory was found wanting for it came near emptying belief of all content. Unable to rest content with this purely negative position, other thinkers, starting from the premise that God's image as the fountain of all creation must indwell and therefore be discernible in that creation assumed that we might draw conclusions as to His character at least indirectly, by way of analogy, passing from the finite to the infinite, thus supplementing by an affirmative theology the theology of negation.

On the grounds of this theory, resting upon analogical inference, J. B. Lotz, J. Collins, and, on somewhat similar lines, J. N. Hartt and von Rintelen have challenged Jaspers' position in that respect. In fact, it is worth while to reproduce the main argument that has been put forward by Lotz, and following him by Collins, in the adequate English rendering that has been given to it by Collins as follows:

> "But in seeking to safeguard the uniqueness and absoluteness of the transcendent God, we need not so separate Him from our existence that He Himself is treated as non-existent. . . . To be, to exist, and to know are perfections which do not involve any intrinsic defect, and hence they are

1 Taken from a thesis, entitled "Jaspers Concept of God," submitted for the degree of doctor of Philosophy to the University of South Africa.

most properly attributed to the transcendent reality in which, as Jaspers admits, there can be no becoming, possibility or imperfection. . . . Thus the analogical unity of being as studied by metaphysics enables us to speak and speak significantly, though not comprehensively, about the source and end of being."[1]

In considering what is involved in this principle of analogy, we come to see that it justifies, by its method of arguing from effect to cause,

"a discursive ascent from the immediately given to the transcendent, even though such an ascent will give only an imperfect understanding of the term of this movement."[2]

In thus advancing into the Transcendence, we are not conquering what belongs to an alien territory, but we are rather reclaiming ground of reality that is by analogy to be identified with ourselves as created in the image of God. The argument, then, to which these considerations are held to lead, is as follows:

"The richness of the object of metaphysics is of two sorts: an immanent secondary kind which coincides with categorical being, and the transcendent richness which is primary and supracategorical. Thus concrete things are included within the order of essences or categories, which are present in, and yet surpass, the individual instances embodying a given perfection. And essences for their own part are included under being and its attributes, without exhausting the resources of being itself. The immanent fullness of categorical essences and concrete finite things supposes a primal reality in which the transcendental perfections of being are realized absolutely, and in which the reality of essences and things is also found in an eminent way. Along these lines the Scholastic theory of transcendence provides the metaphysical foundation of the doctrine of analogy as understood from the standpoint of the creature."[3]

The presupposition which constitutes the cause of inquiry is that according to Lotz,[4] analogical knowledge surpasses the realm of the categorical and by doing so establishes, still within the bounds of the rational, the realm of the supracategorically Rational—a realm which in Jaspers' system is totally cancelled out. In addition, the supracategorical would give Transcendence a fullness of essence, thus making possible a concept of God, however incomplete and in suspension. On any other supposition, the act of Transcendence, while without content and therefore empty, could not yield a picture of God and would finally sink to the level of an empty sphere which while all-comprehensive, yet cannot develop into an object that would stand over against us. In this connection Lotz points to Jaspers' statement to the effect that "though God is, however concealed, yet all-present as the reality,"[5] it remains doubtful what in fact reality does seem to assert. In like manner the cipher, though for philosophy the transcendent reality in the world, can only point to a transcendent reality that is emptied of any content, whereas in the philosophy of analogy God appears as an independent Real, as infinite spirit, restoring for the human mind a worthy object of worship and adoration.

The difference between the two kinds of metaphysics, that of the cipher and that of the analogy, or the stages through which knowledge (of Transcen-

[1] J. Collins, "An Approach to Jaspers" in *Thought*, 1945, pp. 688 ff.
[2] Collins, essay c.p. 690. [3] Collins, e.c.p. 687.
[4] J. B. Lotz, "Analogie Und Chiffre," in *Scholastik*, 1940, pp. 40 ff., and in *Stimmen der Zeit*, 1939, pp. 71 ff.," and in *Orientierung*, 1948, pp. 121.
[5] Jaspers, *Existenzphilosophie*, 1938, p. 70.

dence) passes, is, therefore, defined by Lotz in these terms: "The metaphysics of analogy is one of fulfilled transcending and consequently of the Transcendence itself whereas the metaphysics of the cipher is one of unfulfilled transcending."[1]

> "Thus what Lotz calls the explicative or interpretative method of the theory of ciphers is an incomplete process of transcending, reaching only to the immanent depths of the given. It finds its justification and completion only in the metaphysic of analogy, for the analogical method not only completes the transcending process, but also rises by mediate knowledge to a transcendent and subsistent reality."[2]

The standard by which the admissability of the symbol of the cipher is to be judged must also be given attention according to Hartt for, he says,

> "The notion of Symbol, so important for Jaspers' system, is cheated of its full significance and power by the underlying Kantian epistemological perspective. . . . But at the end, Jaspers lumps the whole scale together in a blanket denial that any analogy yields positive knowledge of God's nature."[3]

Having thus attempted to show in what respects this aspect of Jaspers' system is inadequate Hartt concludes:

> "For me this remains the most perplexing question of all: does God become positively meaningful even then? Or is he left as Wirklichkeit mysteriously expressing itself through its modes, all of which are 'signs and symbols,' including existence itself. But how are the symbols to be interpreted, unless symbol and reality symbolized are somehow or other positively and simultaneously embraced, and unless this embracing, this primal apprehension can be brought up out of the vagueness and mistiness of the 'merely intuitive' into conceptual clarity?"[4]

It is noteworthy that F. J. von Rintelen[5] carried this reasoning still farther, pointing out that our awareness of ultimate Being is intrinsically possessed of cognitive reference to the Transcendent. It is asserted that one has to attribute to Being, be it in its space-time reality or in its spiritual expression as cosmos, a trans-subjective meaning, an essence, an inwardness that in ultimate depth discloses itself to the inwardness of the individual. This interaction is according to von Rintelen not to be defined as appearance merely. The argument does take into account that Jaspers' difficulty does not lie in a denial of objective Reality, but rather in the fact that it cannot become an object of our thought and therefore not an object of any proof. Von Rintelen furthermore draws the conclusion that in our existential encounter and final act of decision and intellectual appreciation of what is significantly conclusive, the Unconditional is bound to become objectified content at least in so far as we intend one particular thing rather than something else. Thus, when this question of moral action is raised, the appeal is to an act of judgment. Here, again and pre-eminently, though recognizing the existential self's historical situation particular to itself only, one has to assume, so von Rintelen argues, that the

[1] Lotz, *Analogie Und Chiffre*, pp. 55–6. [2] Collins, e.c.p. 691.
[3] J. N. Hartt, "God, Transcendence and Freedom in the Philosophy of Jaspers" in *The Review of Metaphysics*, 1950, p. 256.
[4] Hartt, e.c.p. 254–5.
[5] F. J. von Rintelen, *Philosophie Der Endlichkeit*, 1951, pp. 80, 381 ff. (Westkulturverlag, A. Hain, Meisenheim/Glan.)

existential self seizes a certain and specific content of truth—claiming objectivity.

The entire discussion has but a single point. It aims to show that Transcendence as assumed by Jaspers is endangered by the fact that it cannot become an object of thought. It is only through an objective bond which can sustain relations to existential Selves and their activities, it is argued, that Transcendence can subsist. But enter upon this road and, according to Jaspers, the time is sure to come when the appropriate object of thought is stripped of all its transcendent character, and by becoming final and self-sufficient, Transcendence will be found to be lost for ever. It is the ulterior problem of Jaspers' system to make Transcendence, and not just the ever changing results of the process of thinking about Transcendence, prevail in human experience. Those results, gained in limit-situations, will be saved in Jaspers' system by his theory of communication. In any sense in which objectivity is legitimate boundless communication is of the essence of life. The capacity of existential Selves to enter into communication and thereby generate further meanings in respect of existence and Transcendence more profound and far reaching than those from which they sprang, guarantees to human existence what Jaspers' critics seemed eager to deduce from a concept of Transcendence that, on their view, should be available to categories of human thought.

So much for the problem of (fulfilled) Transcendence. Returning to the main subject of our discussion, we must now examine the claim of the supporters of the doctrine of analogy. What, then, shall we say of the justice of the claim of the critics? We do not hesitate to affirm that it does not seem in principle sound—for the process of analogy also lands us in a dilemma, and, indeed, some would maintain that it sets as many problems as it solves. Much as we should like to accept analogical inference it would be a futile guide in questions of the relationship between the finite and the infinite, which differs from the finite not merely in degree. For if we are content to register analogies taken from human life and history, what criterion have we for choosing between the claims of conflicting revelations? Then, again, if we take the analogies seriously we may fall a victim to our anthropomorphic tendencies, making an image of God in the light and likeness of our own predilections. But, on the other hand, if we stress the otherness of Transcendence as difference in kind, we are back again in the teachings of negative theology. A way out of this impasse is offered by Jaspers' teaching of immanent Transcendence, generated in direct experience of the existential self's ascent to freedom, which gives rise to positive expression, not of the essence of Transcendence, which must remain beyond the reach of knowledge, but of the actions of God in relation to man in their historically determined mode of existence. In fact, it is here that the clue lies to Jaspers' acceptance of the fundamental principles of the Bible. These were disclosed to man at the limit situations in which he found himself, yielding, as a result of the struggle with the conditions of a secular order, that insight which was in boundless communication, taken up into a wider movement of thought never to be arrested and unveiling to us the secret of our capacities for good and evil. That process may reflect God's love, but it can never freeze into a fixed substratum of a knowledge of the Transcendent for man which, if it were possible to attain, would rob man of his freedom. In order that freedom, however, should remain the necessary condition of the realization of man's individual destiny, we must refrain from any pretence to a knowledge of the Transcendence; this would have the effect only of destroying the most essential link of man with God, namely freedom. In their zeal to vindicate Transcendence and assure its permanence in the life of man by appealing to its analogical character (thus bridging the gulf between the finite

and the infinite), the critics have shut their eyes to the truth of the fundamental presupposition of Jaspers, which at the same time constitutes his "critique of Transcendence," namely that

> "God exists for me in the degree to which I in freedom authentically become myself. He does not exist as a scientific content but only as openness to existence. . . . Since that which is for us must be manifested in the temporality of the world, there can be no direct knowledge of God and existence. There can only be faith."[1]

Another recent critic of Jaspers ought to be mentioned here as well: Heinemann[2] maintains that the philosophy of existence in the latest works of Jaspers "completes itself, suffers shipwreck and then overcomes itself." It completes itself because its purpose is from the start to pave a way (and keep it open) to Transcendence; but by doing so it suffers shipwreck as a philosophy of existence, because it cannot establish any logic or ethics; it then overcomes itself by recognizing a metaphysics of the Comprehensive, with its acknowledgments of the principles of the Biblical religion, thus breaking the chains of the sphere of existence.

This interpretation merely takes sentences from the main work of Jaspers out of their context in order to prove a particular thesis. We maintain that there is a harmonious development of Jaspers' ideas towards their climax in his latest works. Further, against Heinemann, who thinks that a world-spirit guided by Jaspers' ideas could not create anything, for on Jaspers' premise no fixation in the form of any object or thing in nature would be admitted, we must say that such fixation seems to be possible, on Jaspers' own premises, in the existential decision, which could, however, not be a lasting one as it is continually involved in further progress. Further we cannot adopt the standpoint of God and look at things from that Divine viewpoint as Heinemann attempts to do. Likewise, ethical demands naturally follow from Jaspers' theory of Communication, which in fact led him to the adoption of Biblical principles. Thus the idea of moral demands ("ought") remains unconditional for the existential self, whose realization alone assures to it (the existential self) its possible freedom to develop into authentic existence while relating itself to Transcendence.

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[1] Jaspers, *Way to Wisdom*, pp. 45–6 and p. 82 (E.T. by R. Manheim, Gollancz, 1951).

[2] F. Heinemann, "Was ist Lebendig und was ist Tot in der Existenzphilosophie" in *Zeitschrift f. Philosophische Forschung*, 1950, pp. 17 ff. In this connection it is of interest to note that Jaspers himself in a letter (10.3.1951) to me expressed his opinion on Heinemann's point as follows: "Nicht das Gestalten und Objectivwerden wird von mir in Frage gestellt, sondern nur die Fixierung und Verknoecherung darin."

II

THE EPISTEMOLOGY OF BUDDHISM, TAOISM AND CONFUCIANISM

The ultimate teachings of Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism are in essence completely similar. It is said: "The more you know, the less you really know; and the less you know, the more you really know."

What is the reason for this? "The more you know" pertains to a knowledge merely discursive and rational. "The more you do not know" pertains to divine knowing of the pure intellect. Because profane knowledge comes from the outside, there is a distinction between the knower and the thing outside the knower. So you have the separate entity that knows, and the thing or object known. When this distinction exists, what is known is only the appearance of things, the gross corporeal modality, while nothing is known of our true self or inner being. Therefore, the more you know of appearances the less you know of reality. For example: water for the human being is different from water for the fish; for fish the water is his true atmosphere. Night is a time of darkness for man, but, for an owl, it is his day. Filth is rejected by humans, but is home for the insects. Therefore, since the needs and environments of every particular being vary, each point of view is relative to the particular creature; all knowledge received from sense impressions is approximate and relative, and has little to do with the true reality.

Should a cosmological explanation be given by the fish, the owl or insects, we should laugh at them. However, for the owl, the moon is his sun, for the fish, the water is his atmosphere; and for the insect filth is his delicious food and fine home. We laugh at them because they are ignorant of the true nature of things, and we realize that the more they think they know, the less they actually know. It is the same for human beings; for we, too, gain our perceptions as other animals do, through external appearances. The animals can thus laugh at us in our ignorance.

Knowledge known from the outside is of appearance, and is not of reality. Therefore, the more we know, the less we really know. But in what way can we know reality? We must know our true or Inner Self; the principle of our birth and becoming which we share with all things in the universe. Therefore, if we know our own True Self, and our gross physical self, then we shall know all things. The scientists work day and night in measuring the quantity and quality of things. But these things all exist very near to us—as close even as breathing. We can find them directly in the organism and in the cells of our own self.

The Chinese philosopher said, "it is wonderful that men can use their eyes, their ears, and their thoughts, to see, to hear, and to think of things outside of themselves. Why cannot they use their ears, their eyes, and their thoughts, to hear, to see, and to think inside themselves?—for there is much circulating and moving within, since there are many parts such as lungs, liver, heart, and intestines, etc. We should use our mind for understanding our own self, for the source of all hearing, seeing, and thinking, etc., lies within. Alas, man can see and hear that which is outside of him, yet that which is inside, and so very near, few men know. If we could know the principle within, then we should know our True Self, and thus all things."

What is this reality, and how may we come to an awareness of it? First, we must know the one principle of all things—when knower, knowing, and known

become one. True knowledge is by identification, consequently, there is no duality. True knowing is therefore identical with what is known, we then have not rational knowledge but pure intelligence. This pure intelligence does not know appearances, but rather knows the essence of things.

An important question might be asked. Why do men think that knowing, knower and known are different? Why cannot we be aware of our True Self, and thus know the essence of all things? The answer, according to Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism is that we are bound to illusions by appearances, by physical objects. Therefore, if we can liberate ourselves from becoming, from that which is unreal, we shall then know the reality of all things.

For solving this problem of obtaining true knowledge, we find in Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism three different systems or ways, but each path leads to the same goal, which is freedom from appearance, and awareness of true reality.

The method of Buddhism is by contemplation and observance or discrimination. Contemplation means to empty oneself of all irrelevant thoughts, so that the pure reason may emerge, and we may keep it pure. Water, if there is no wind, is clear. If dirty water is allowed to stand, the dirt will settle, and the water will become clear.

Observance or discrimination means that we must continually be aware of the unreality of the material world, until finally we see that all things are unstable and but a flux: then the pure intelligence is complete. There are many types of discrimination in accordance with the different natures of men. For example, if a man is trying to free himself from indulgence with a lovely girl, he would at first imagine in his mind a beautiful girl, and then in his mind imagine her deprived of her skin, after which the blood would flow in a red and terrible colour. There remains little of beauty now. He would further in his mind cut open her abdomen, and there find the intestines, stomach, etc., full of digested food and filth. Further, we might picture that the girl is dead, and imagine her state after one or two years. There is no more flesh now, but only many white bones. Can you love her bones? Therefore, to "resolve" the girl from the beginning to the end, we find that all is emptiness, appearance, illusion. This is called the "white bone observance," and if this observance is followed every day, sensualism will naturally disappear.

Again, if someone indulges in worldly property, he might follow the "observance of emptiness," and find that all his property is really illusory, and will pass away. There are many kinds of such observances.

A most important observance is the "not I observance," which means that there is no more myself, but only a temporary *mixture*, or fictitious self. In the teaching of Buddhism, all evils come from the idea of "I." If we have the idea of "I," there is a wall that separates us from reality and the integral One. According to the teaching of Buddhism, all the world of knowledge is based upon the idea of separation, and the notion of separateness is duality, and this is the source of all evils.

In order to free ourselves from this idea of selfhood, at first we must know that the human being is but a temporal fictitious mixture. In fact, there is no such thing as an "I," for the "I" or self is not a stable or immutable being.

Why is this? According to Buddhism, the structure of man consists of four parts: Earth, the solid principle; water, the fluid principle; fire, the principle of heat; and wind, the breath principle. These principles determine the material world; they are the "four greatnesses" according to Buddhism; they are the foundation of the world of Nature and man, although they must not be confused with corporeality itself, for they are principles. They are also called the four great germs or essences, not corporeal, but potentialities. Man

has eight senses or consciousnesses, all connected with mind. These are the senses of hearing, seeing, smelling, tasting, touch; the sixth consciousness is equal to mind, and the seventh consciousness is a transition between the sixth and eighth consciousness, the eighth consciousness (or the king consciousness) being the source of all the senses or consciousnesses. Such is the structure of man.

Now, if we have the idea of "I," we try to discriminate and find out who this "I" is—what particular part represents the "I." If we suppose it to be the solid part, this is obviously a part of the whole body, and since it is a part, it cannot be the "I." Or if we suppose it to be the other parts—fluid or heat or breath, this is also impossible. And, further, we must know that we cannot even possess the same quality of the solid, the liquid, or the breath elements in the same or at a given time. Why is this? Every one knows that man is a being that has a birth and death, which he shares with all material organisms in the universe. We also know that every one passes through different stages, from the baby to boy, to young man, to old age, to decay and to death. This means that the material elements of our flesh change, are ever in a state of flux. These changes do not come suddenly, but continuously, so that the body is changing every minute, every second. It is undergoing a perpetual process of decay and growth. This changing we can perceive in breathing. You cannot possess the air in the breathing at a given moment, for, in the inhalation and expiration, the air is constantly changing, and when you try to grasp the breath, it has already gone far away. Similarly, with all the other parts (the liquid, the fire, and the solid), you cannot possess them at a given moment. All is flux, all is illusory, all is like a dream. Who are you? With which part can you know yourself? Discriminating in this vein, you lose all sense of self.

Again, you might imagine that even if we cannot find ourselves through our material parts, we could find ourselves in consciousness, that is to say, in the mind. Because there is some thing known, and some thing is known by a knower, we might say that the knower is the true self. If you think that this is true, you would discriminate again. Who is the consciousness? Who is the knower? You could not find it, for if you suppose the sense of seeing, hearing, smelling, and tasting is the true self, that is wrong, for the activities of the five senses are limited by their separate perceptions. They are different from each other. They cannot form a complete whole. Then, we might suppose that the sixth consciousness is the true self, for it can receive all senses of smelling, seeing, hearing, etc. This is also wrong. For since the activity of the sixth consciousness is limited to comprehending and perceiving things, it also is temporal.

In spite of the fact that the seventh consciousness is eternal, it is likewise incorrect to suppose that it is the true self. According to the Buddha, the relation between the sixth and seventh level of consciousness is like that of a light to a candle, the light representing the perceiving and discerning power of the sixth consciousness; while the root and source of light is the candle, the seventh consciousness. The candle, however, is light in potential; so, also, is the seventh consciousness (the perceiving and discerning power is potential only); it is unconscious, and has no knowledge of itself.

We may suppose that the eighth consciousness (or the king consciousness) which comprehends and summarizes all consciousness and remembers and possesses all things must be our true self. But according to the teaching of Buddha, this is not the case. To illustrate: one sees the water of the ocean; the foams and waves arising from it are of different forms and sizes, and show only the appearance of water. But we cannot identify them with the essence of the water. The essence (or nature) of the water is its calmness and tran-

quillity; it is neither identical with its manifestation (waves, foams), nor is it completely different from them. Rather, it possesses a nature of neutrality. Thus, the eighth consciousness, which is the source of all consciousness, possesses and remembers all things, but in itself is neither consciousness (of self), nor unconsciousness (of self), but it is of the "nature of neutrality." Therefore, we cannot find out who we are from the eighth consciousness.[1]

And in addition, the idea or sense of consciousness is as much in flux as is the breathing which was described above. When you make up your mind to possess your idea and to find your self, it is impossible that a conception should be immutable, for thousands of ideas are in a constant state of flux and interchange, like a series of pictures continually moving. You cannot possess any idea in your mind at a given moment. Therefore, any idea you have in your mind is not your real self.

Discrimination is thus necessary in order to free us from the bond of self. When we find that there is no immutable self, we enter into the unified intellect, and if we participate in this super-rational intellect, we then become identical with every object in its manifestation. Thus, we find our own true self.

In summing up the teaching of Buddhism: the suppressing of desire is not an end in itself, but is a way to lead us to reality. Our nature is ignorant of reality. But the Buddha knows the reality, and returns to this world to teach us to see the reality ourselves, very much as the men of Plato's cave, after seeing the light, return to the cave to teach those in darkness. The first step then is to learn to discriminate between appearances—to find a door into reality. The second step is to enter into this reality, and to grow in awareness of it. The third step is to attain perfect realization of the supreme identity.

Although there are many very valuable and important philosophical theories in Buddhism, Buddhism is not propounded for the sake of knowledge or to establish a philosophical system; but, on the contrary, Buddha wants to reduce the appearance to the reality, in order to lead man to observe and discriminate, and to enter into reality. These teachings belong to Mahayana Buddhism, and it wants us to enter into the world in order to help all human beings to become Buddha. So, at first, Buddha recognizes the world; second, he discriminates the world; third, he discovers the illusory character of the world; fourth, he points out the unreality of the world; and fifth, he advises all human beings to leave the appearance and enter into reality. So the teaching of Mahayana Buddhism is reasonable, while the teaching of Hinhayana Buddhism is just the opposite. Thus Hinhayana Buddhism gives us more meditation teachings, in order to get one's self-salvation, and does not instruct us to return again to this world to teach reality to mankind.

The way of the Taoists is to follow certain breathing exercises, in order to control the circulation of the blood which finally influences the organism of the body, so that our pure reason is liberated from the flesh. There are three stages or exercises in Taoism: (1) the biological exercise, to control the physical organization; (2) the psychological exercise, to control the mind; (3) spiritual exercise, which is the last stage and is the great liberation of the spirit or soul. We can see that the Taoist methods are more scientific and naturalistic, because the Taoist is very familiar with the biological structure of our physical organization; consequently, most of the Chinese medical doctrines came from the Taoist school.

The method of Confucianism is based upon ethics. Confucius' chief teaching

[1] There is no equivalent terminology for the seventh and eighth consciousness in Western philosophy. I want to apologise for these terms, which seem unclear to the Western mind.

is piety in everything, and the practice of the pure reason in everything. Here "piety" does not mean wordly piety, but is the starting point of the pure reason. You must control and preserve your pure reason every minute. The method of piety is non-self-indulgence, for if you are not self-indulgent, then pure reason opens to you. Our strength, therefore, lies in restraining our desires. Piety does not come from the outside, but is the very nature of pure reason.

To practise the extension of the pure reason in everything is to start with ethical love for parents; then to go to brothers and sisters; then to friends; then to all men, and then even to all animals, trees and grass, until you eventually embrace the whole universe. Thus the illusory "many" becomes "One."

The teaching of Confucianism, on the one hand, is directed to consciousness itself, which is pure reason. Feed it and it flourishes. Buddhism and Taoism, on the other hand, teach the killing of the desires of the flesh. But although these are different methods, the end is the same. For the one, when we destroy desire, the pure reason appears; for the other, when there is pure reason, there is no desire. They therefore have the same end.

Gi-Ming Shien.

PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY

PHILOSOPHY IN ITALY

Among the most notable works on the history of philosophy that have appeared in Italy in recent years those of Mario Dal Pra must undoubtedly be reckoned. Already author of a monograph on *Scoto Eriugena e il neo-platonismo medievale* (1941) and of one on *Condillac* (1942), Dal Pra has in subsequent years issued the following studies, all published by Bocca of Milan: *Hume* (1949), *Lo scetticismo greco* (1950), *La storiografia filosofica antica* (1950), *Giovanni di Salisbury* (1951), *Amalrico di Bene* (1951), and *Nicola di Autrecourt* (1951). The criteria that govern this intensive and widespread historical activity have been frequently stated by Dal Pra in articles in the *Rivista Critica di Storia della Filosofia*, which he directs; but they can be read in a more ordered and exact form in the introduction to *La storiografia filosofica antica*. Dal Pra maintains that the correct point of view for a historian is that for which the unity of the history of philosophy is not "guaranteed and established" but is rather "to be realized as far as possible." It is not a question of discovering "a given historical unity" but of constructing "a possible historical unity," since to take the unity of history as established destroys its historical value, while to consider it as possible and capable of practical integration is to make it historical. From this point of view it is possible to obtain a new understanding of both the *systematic* and the *objective* requirements of the history of philosophy. The former is expressed in the search for the greatest possible unity, the latter in the particular and determinate consideration of the various philosophies, "motivated by the persuasion of the free autonomy in which they have been stated and developed." This, which is the correct point of view, by means of which the activity of the historian can comprehend, construct, and realize the historical unity of philosophy, is in opposition to the other, for which this unity is already realized and guaranteed as that of one sole philosophy which evolves through necessary impulses and has outside itself nothing but aberrations and errors. This second form, which is then romantic history, or, more specifically, Hegelian, is designated by Da Pra as "theoreticist," while he calls the first "practicist" or "transcendentalist-practical." Now I fully share Dal Pra's historical point of view, which for my part I try to realize in my historical writings, but I find the proposed denominations improper and somewhat confusing. "Theoreticism" and "practicism" are terms that seem to presuppose a separation and antithesis between theory and practice which it would be difficult to justify, or which, at any rate, require a whole system of metaphysics for justification. Further, so-called "practice" may be (and sometimes has been and is) as dogmatic and necessitarian as a dogmatic and necessitarian theory. Moreover, that every so-called "theory" is such is an unjustified assumption, since Dal Pra's same historical point of view could, under a certain aspect, be considered as a "theory."

It is, evidently, a question of linguistic convenience; but, as often happens in philosophy, such a question implies another more substantial one. In fact, to designate as "theoreticism" and "practicism" the two typical points of view by which the history of philosophy and, in general, as Dal Pra maintains, any philosophical activity may be conducted, *may* signify the abandonment of further investigation into the logico-linguistic instruments, the functional categories, of which historical research and philosophical activity

avail themselves. That is to say, it is possible to foresee a danger that, under the name of "theoreticist" or "practicist," a philosophical position may be maintained, in consequence, that everything has been said concerning it, and further search into the categories that constitute its basis may be evaded. Dal Pra does not wholly avoid this danger in his theoretic essays; it seems less serious in the historical investigations with which we are now dealing. For instance, he sees in Hume a fundamental "theoreticist moment" in his "credulous and uncritical adherence to the values of experience"; this would be the dogmatic and negative aspect of Hume's philosophy. But this does not hinder him from following sympathetically the developments of Hume's analysis and underlining his most noteworthy conclusions. Hence, Dal Pra's monograph on Hume, while not adding much to Kemp Smith's, is a solid and well directed work from which the figure of Hume emerges illuminated in all its aspects.

The monograph on *Lo scetticismo greco* is, I believe, Dal Pra's most successful work. In it his speculative interest and his gifts as a historian are harmoniously united in the reconstruction of a philosophical position in comparison with which Dal Pra has tried the better to define his own. The work makes use of all the available sources and the literature on the subject, and concludes with the statement that scepticism is theoreticism, exactly like dogmatism, and with the need to find a "third way" between scepticism and dogmatism, a way which Dal Pra indicates in the "transcendentalism of praxis." Dal Pra reaches this conclusion after having distinguished three forms of scepticism. The first is that which asserts the nonexistence of truth or of the absolute significance of reality. The second is not dogmatically fixed in this negation but suspends all judgment, and avoids giving that same *epoche* any ontological value whatever. Finally, the third is that which abandons itself to "uncritical adhesion, immediatistic and pragmatic, to any fact of consciousness and action," without troubling to bestow on such an attitude even the value of negation of absolute truth. This last form would be the "critical" phase of scepticism; and evidently all three of these phases are more or less present in the ancient sceptics. But none of these, not even the third, according to Dal Pra, escapes from the theoretistic circle. Since the suspension of judgment does not avoid "the complete handing over of the destiny of man to contemplation," and the uncritical adhesion to an immediate fact, and renounces any attempt at justification, it merely closes completely the theoretical circle, without crossing it at any point. The third way, which is that adopted by Dal Pra as surmounting both dogmatism and scepticism, envisages "the critique of existence, the need to consume existence without residue in a radical justification that will confer on it a meaning in virtue of other than existence, or rather in virtue of its practical concretion within a horizon that seems to reabsorb existence from infinity." However, he does not succeed in discerning clearly what may be the conceptual and linguistic instruments which such a search might dispose of, or to what objects or fields of investigation it might be directed. Thus, as it is presented, Dal Pra's thesis is a generic invitation to research, a search as impartial as one could wish, but extraordinarily poor in instruments and deprived of information on its possible objects. Contemporary science claims for itself the right to an unprejudiced and radical research, and seeks as far as possible to be critical in the comparison of its instruments of investigation and its objects. But Dal Pra criticizes adversely the thesis of Léon Robin (*Pyrrhon et les sceptiques grecs*, Paris, 1944), that scepticism, by eliminating the illusion of an absolute consciousness, has opened the way to science, and he sees in this thesis a dogmatic positivism. Perhaps Dal Pra has not considered how much science

has departed from the positivistic dogmatism of a century ago, or (as also may be said) how far the positivism of the present day has travelled from nineteenth-century positivism.

Dal Pra has ventured on a very uncultivated territory with his study on *La storiografia filosofica antica*. Here, however, the results he reaches are more modest. The material collected is abundant and has been well arranged, but no conclusions have been reached that serve to throw light on the way in which general philosophical work evolved in ancient Greece. Least successful of all are the pages devoted to Plato and Aristotle. There is insufficient explanation of the relation between Plato and Socrates (which is nevertheless decisive for the philosophy of Plato) and of that between Aristotle and Plato. For Aristotle Dal Pra confines himself to collecting some observations by Jaeger, Mondolfo and Banfi.

Even in the field of medieval philosophy Dal Pra turns his attention for preference to figures in whom the critical and negative attitude prevails over the systematic and constructive. Amalric of Bène, John of Salisbury and Nicholas of Autrecourt are three among such figures, to whom Dal Pra has devoted precise and well-ordered studies. According to Dal Pra, of the two fundamental themes of Christian neo-Platonism, God as first principle of reality and God as transcendence, Amalric has coherently developed the first, and has thus succeeded in demonstrating the contrast of this with the second. But precisely on this account he is linked with Scotus Erigena and the school of Chartres, who form the central points of the historical development of that neo-Platonism. Hence Dal Pra can justly insert the thought of Amalric in medieval philosophy, from which the Catholic historians (especially De Wulf and Gilson) had tried to expunge it, reducing it to an insignificant aberration.

In John of Salisbury Dal Pra stresses principally the probabilistic attitude, in which he sees, not a superficial literary eclecticism, but a position of thought which was later to be affirmed and dominate scholasticism with the occamistic movement. And to a notable figure of this movement, Nicholas of Autrecourt, he has dedicated his most recent monograph, basing it chiefly on the treatise *Exsigit ordo*, published in 1939 by O'Donnel, and drawing inspiration chiefly from the studies of Vignaux and Weinberg. The points on which Dal Pra throws light in the philosophy of Nicholas of Autrecourt are the following: his treatment of the problem of faith, his doctrine of evidence, the conception of metaphysics as hypothesis. They are the points on which, according to Dal Pra, this medieval thinker can indicate even to contemporary philosophy the way to free itself whether from the absolutism of reason or from that of experience.

NICOLA ABBAGNANO.

(Translated from the Italian by Beatrice Allen.)

NEW BOOKS

Experiments in Living: A study of the nature and foundations of ethics or morals in the light of recent work in Social Anthropology. The Gifford Lectures for 1948–49, delivered in the University of St. Andrews. By A. MACBEATH. (London, Macmillan, 1952. Pp. ix + 462. Price 30s.)

This book is noteworthy in that it represents the only serious attempt by a contemporary British philosopher to take into detailed account in ethics the data supplied by modern anthropology. In fact no less than five of the fifteen chapters consist in a systematic study, by way of illustration, of the social institutions and ethics of four contemporary primitive peoples. (As the author admits, the term primitive is not very satisfactory, but it is hard to think of another. The peoples that anthropologists can investigate are certainly not primitive in the sense of being the earliest or simplest human peoples who have existed on the earth or anything approaching this.) The general picture drawn of primitive peoples differs in fundamental respects from what was till recently the accepted view. They are pictured as more rational, more utilitarian, more secular in their ethics, more considerate and flexible by far than I should have expected, more, in fact, like modern civilized men, whose thinking, it must be remembered, also contains marked alogical elements. Except for the belief in witchcraft (which has its modern analogues) and the relative lack of economic efficiency due to ignorance of modern science, the institutions described strike me as actually comparing very favourably at any rate either with modern communism or with the nineteenth-century system of unrestricted economic individualism. It is a salutary lesson to learn that we are not as much above "primitive men" as we are apt to suppose, and it would be excellent if Chapter X, which effectively demolishes the theory of the mental inferiority to us of such peoples, were read very widely indeed.

It appears to be by no means the case that the ethics of primitive peoples are mainly derived from religious beliefs of a type which we do not now accept or from any ideas of the supernatural at all. Primitive, as more developed, religion, it is admitted, plays a very important part in increasing the readiness of men to fulfil their acknowledged moral duties and in affecting their emotional life; but this is not to say that the moral rules are derived from or prescribed mainly by religion, a very important distinction indeed that is often blurred in considering the relations between ethics and religion. With the tribes taken as illustrations and with most others what supernatural beings there are concern themselves very little with ethics, yet religious ceremonies train their participants in unselfish co-operative action for what is at least believed to be the common good and help to give them a feeling of relative security in life. Where there are supernatural sanctions they commonly prove insufficient if the rules backed by them are really irksome to the individual, and these are in that case commonly evaded unless they can be shown to have a purpose of a more mundane kind for the benefit of the community. This can hardly apply to all primitive peoples—one asks, what about human sacrifice?—but it seems to apply to a good many. The general impression which the author seeks to convey is that, when we have allowed for the consequences of different beliefs as to matters of fact, especially the belief in the disastrous effects produced by not performing the right magical ceremonies, the institutions of primitive people are essentially rational on the whole, and that they, to an extent not incomparable with ourselves,

obey moral laws because they see them to be a necessary part of a way of social life which they on the whole apprehend as good and not because they just take them on faith in abstraction from their consequences.

What is the bearing of these anthropological studies on philosophical ethics? I think that the anthropological chapters will appear more interesting to most readers than the philosophical, but the book is not written for the purpose of a study of anthropology as an end-in-itself, but for the purpose of supporting a philosophical view in ethics and refuting others. This is where my function comes in. I am not qualified to deal with the anthropological evidence as such, but may discuss at least the conclusions drawn from it for philosophy. On the former I can only say that, while the author seems convincing on many points including those I have summarized above, he occasionally introduces a statement for which he does not cite the evidence, which seems very implausible because it ascribes too much rationality and which we can see it would be very difficult to establish empirically. Thus, while denying all intuitions of the obligatoriness or even *prima facie* obligatoriness of particular kinds of actions, he attributes to primitive men the intuitions that what is required by the way of life which is on the whole good is obligatory, and that the doing of what is obligatory because it is obligatory is morally good (p. 396). These principles are so abstract, with their distinction between the three terms obligatory, good, and morally good, that it is very hard to see in what sense they could be held to be intuited by people without literary education, and the position is made more difficult by Professor Macbeath's insistence that for an intuition to be valid it must be recognizable by all men as such. Does the primitive man usually regard an opponent who does conscientiously what he believes wrong as morally good? That requires a higher level of moral intelligence than is apparently reached by the mediaeval inquisitor or the modern Communist. And, in general, is the author sufficiently aware of the extreme difficulty of determining *why* primitives hold their moral beliefs? Even civilized people are liable to be far from clear as to why they hold the beliefs they do. The fact that a man gives a utilitarian justification of a belief when asked does not prove that he really holds it for that reason and not primarily because it seems self-evident, or "on faith," the alleged reason being a rationalization.

What is the philosophical purpose of all this investigation? The chief use which has been made of anthropological material in the past has been to cast doubt on an objective view and suggest a naturalist explanation of ethics, but the author does not use it for any such purpose at all and hardly discusses the question of the issue between objectivism (which he supports) and these theories, though summing up his position effectively on pp. vii–viii. His purpose is rather to refute the kind of objectivism which rests its faith on self-evident propositions, supposed to be apprehended intuitively, about the right or the good. He is indeed primarily thinking of the view of Sir David Ross, but he regards his work as also refuting Ideal Utilitarianism of the ordinary type. For the Ideal Utilitarians, as well as Ross, rely on judgments supposed to be final and self-evident about elements of the good life taken in isolation, differing only in that they insist that these concern not primarily the right but the good. Both sides, Professor Macbeath holds, err in abstracting rightness and goodness respectively from the institutions in the context of which acts are seen to be right and ends good, and the book is intended to show that an account of the morality of primitive men is impossible except in terms of their institutions and then on the basis of the assumption that they are not fundamentally different from ourselves to draw a similar conclusion about our own ethics. For, it is contended, if the propositions about

prima facie duties or what is intrinsically good are really self-evident, all people must be capable of seeing them to be so. Our author even goes so far as to maintain that a judgment which differed from ours here would not be moral at all.

What are we to think of Professor Macbeath's case against his opponents, assuming his anthropological data to be correct? I do not hold that it is quite the knock-down disproof that he seems to think it to be. He shows convincingly in his account of the primitive peoples discussed that a practice which seems to us quite absurd and even repulsive may be justified for a person who holds the factual beliefs assumed and is familiar with its actual working in the context of their institutions. But in most cases at least, these differences in primitive institutions do not presuppose any discrepancy with Sir David Ross's list of *prima facie* duties. The same exceedingly general rules that the latter mentions, it can easily be shown, justify in different social environments quite different courses of detailed action. But there are two much more serious points made. (1) It is pointed out that a number of primitive tribes, otherwise fairly well developed morally, have apparently no sense at all of the wrongness of lying, even to members of the same community, except in cases where it is obviously directly harmful to individuals. That lying is wrong or even *prima facie* wrong, cannot then be an intuition self-evident to all men. It is, however, relevant to point out here that Sir David Ross does not in fact include in his list of ultimate *prima facie* duties the duty to abstain from lying, but makes this derivative from the *prima facie* duty to keep promises, because entering into conversation involves an implicit undertaking not to tell lies (he adds "at any rate by civilized men," *The Right and the Good*, p. 21). Now in a community in which lying was not condemned except when it was seen to be directly harmful to a particular individual, a person could hardly be held to have committed himself to such an undertaking by using language since truthfulness would not in general be expected of him, and therefore it might perhaps be argued that the reasons other than utilitarian for telling the truth would disappear. It is not the mere use of language that puts us under the obligation, but only its use under contexts (unlike that of novel-writing) where it would be assumed by the listener to give true information. That the peoples in question take too narrow a view of the utility of truth-telling Professor Macbeath would no doubt agree. He thinks the prevalence of lying is largely caused by the belief in black magic and the terrible atmosphere of suspicion it often engenders. (2) It is pointed out that primitive peoples commonly do not recognize any obligation to those outside their tribe or group of tribes. If they apprehended moral rules as self-evident in themselves, it is argued, this would surely not be so, but it is easily explained if they think of them as bound up inextricably with their system of institutions, these embodying a way of life which they regard as on the whole good. This is the most formidable argument against Sir David Ross, but I must note that it seems to contradict one of Professor Macbeath's main premisses, or at least a combination of two of them. Professor Macbeath insists (*a*) that primitive minds do not operate on radically different principles from ours, (*b*) that, if a person does not accept what is really self-evident to us in ethics, his mind must be radically different from ours (p. 10). But to pass from the recognition of moral rules as valid only for members of the same community to the recognition of their universal validity is surely quite as big a step as the step constituted by the apprehension of one of Ross's *prima facie* duties. It does not indeed seem so difficult to me to defend an intuitionist view according to which all men capable of morality did not intuit all the laws from the start but only came to do so through varying stages of confusion. But as has

been felt very widely, there does seem to be something unsatisfactory about an ethics which bases everything on a list of unrelated *prima facie* duties, each just supposed to be seen intuitively to be valid without reference to the others. There does seem to be need here for a use of coherence in some form, at least as a principle for testing.

What does our author put in place of the views he rejects? He calls his the self-realization theory, but when he has made the qualifications needed to save the view from the charge of egoism, as he does, I can see nothing to justify the use of the term. His aim is a theory which will put the concept of rules and the concept of good on a level, either requiring the other (v. pp. 33–4). But the theory calls for further development with the help of particular illustrations. The author claims that it brings to light the principle which can decide what is right in case of clashes, while the intuitionist theory leaves the moral agent in such cases without any guiding principle (p. 383), but he does not show at all how it achieves this in detail. And he does not answer the question whether there are or are not cases in which a rule should be obeyed although obedience to it in these particular cases does not produce the greatest good. He is helped, I think, to take a more utilitarian view than would otherwise appeal to him by a confusion between utilitarianism in the sense which justifies an action by its particular consequences and the justification of an action by reference to the bad consequences which would follow *if* everybody broke the rule.

Professor Macbeath insists strongly on the unique position of moral goodness as compared to other values. Moral goodness, he contends, is never itself part of the end aimed at, but is realized in the pursuit of any end because it is believed right to pursue it (pp. 62 ff., 417). He thus claims to avoid the dilemma which arises because moral goodness, if treated as one end among others, has to be compared with other ends in a way which seems to derogate from its supreme position. But it may be doubted whether he is successful in this. There is not, we may admit, a special duty to be moral apart from the duty to perform any of our particular duties, but may not a particular duty consist in taking steps which are likely to improve in preference to steps which are likely to impair our own moral character in the future, and may not that duty conflict with others? E.g. it is a commonplace that posts to which much power, prestige and wealth are attached are liable to be bad for a man's moral character. Might not the question arise for a man who knew himself distinctly liable to the temptations which these things bring whether he ought to take the moral risks of accepting such a post for the sake of the greater happiness of other people or not? And might he not have to choose, e.g. in educating the young, between a measure which he thought conduced slightly more to the moral good of somebody else at the expense of a great deal of pain and a measure which he thought slightly less likely to produce these good moral effects but much better for the person's happiness?

It seems to me that it would be a great gain to have a theory which would serve to bring our ethical judgments into much more of a coherent whole than does the theory provided by Sir David Ross or even by the ideal utilitarians, who have to face irreducible differences between different kinds of good, if not between good and ought. It is towards such a theory that Professor Macbeath is feeling his way. And when he insists that people in general think more in terms of institutions and less in terms of rules than is commonly realized, and that moral philosophers should do so, too, I am not altogether disinclined to agree provided, as is the case, he means that the rules must be brought into an organized context and is not just appealing to existing institutions. He is quite prepared to bring the relative merits of

different systems of institutions themselves under the coherence test. His theory needs developing much more in detail, but I certainly found the book one of the most stimulating and interesting of recent contributions on ethics.

A. C. EWING.

The Continuum of Inductive Methods. By RUDOLF CARNAP. (The University of Chicago Press. 1952. Cambridge University Press. Pp. vi + 92. Price 26s.)

This monograph is the forerunner of Vol. II of Professor Carnap's work on *Probability and Induction* of which Vol. I appeared in 1950 under the title of *Logical Foundations of Probability*. It seems to me of great importance and suggestiveness.

Professor Carnap believes that two distinct concepts are needed at the basis of a complete theory of probability, and he calls the one, the degree of confirmation of a given sentence or statement relative to given evidence, and the other, the estimate of the frequency of a given character in a given class of objects, relative to given evidence. Of these two, in his view, degree of confirmation is more fundamental, and he bases his theory on it, choosing his theory of estimation to correspond with it.

All this was expounded in Vol. I. What he does in this monograph (which can be read independently of Vol. I) is to ask the general question, what kind of formula it is reasonable to take as giving degree of confirmation. In a discussion of great interest he shows that our general notions about probability do not compel us to adopt one formula, but leave open a wide choice of alternatives. Among these he takes a particular set, wide enough to include all the formulae hitherto proposed by theorists, and puts forward certain statistical tests for deciding which of them will, in given conditions, be most satisfactory to use as the basis for estimates of relative frequency.

His discussion is limited to what can be said in a language which permits a number of individuals to be described by primitive predicates (logically independent of each other), without any questions arising of causal interaction, etc., and where all we are concerned with is the choice of a formula for giving degrees of confirmation and estimates of relative frequency, either before or after a single sample has been examined.

I have no space to bring out the richness and the complexity of his treatment, but a simple illustration will, perhaps, show the kind of thing he is doing. Suppose we know that there are N balls in a bag, each either black or white, and that a sample selection of s balls showed that s_1 were white, the rest black. Let us now ask, what is the probability (Carnap's "degree of confirmation") relative to this evidence, of the statement that a particular ball, not yet drawn from the bag, is white; or again, what estimate is to be given, relative to this evidence, of the proportion of white balls in the bag.

On one extreme view (which may be called the logical view) the only relevant evidence is that each ball is either white or black; and on this evidence the answer to both our questions is a half. On the opposite view (which gives what Professor Carnap calls the straight estimate) the only relevant evidence is the proportion of white among the balls drawn, and on this evidence the answer is s_1/s. Professor Carnap suggests that we should examine a formula which gives weight to both kinds of evidence. His formula would give in the above case

$$\frac{W_1 . s_1/s + W_2 . \frac{1}{2}}{W_1 + W_2}$$

where W_1 and W_2 are the weights to be attached to the two estimates. Here it is only the fraction W_1/W_2 which matters, and this may be chosen by us for a variety of reasons. Professor Carnap uses a constant λ, which equals $s.W_2/W_1$, so that his formula becomes, in the above case

$$\frac{s_1 + \lambda.\frac{1}{2}}{s + \lambda}$$

It is easy to derive the formula in the case of a complex predicate. If $\lambda = 0$ we have the straight estimate, if λ is infinite, the logical one.

In Part I of the monograph Professor Carnap shows that a general formula of this sort for degree of confirmation enables us, given the simple type of language to which he has limited himself, to determine the degree of confirmation of any sentence in the language on the evidence of any other sentence or set of sentences. And if the estimate of relative frequency of a predicate (simple or complex) among the individuals in the population is based on the degree of confirmation of the sentence attributing this predicate to an unexamined individual, then the formula defines a complete inductive method. Any numerical value of λ from 0 to infinity satisfies the general probability conditions. This formula then contains a "continuum of inductive methods," any one of which can be chosen by an investigator as his guide in his estimates.

The problem then arises, how are we to choose between them? This is a practical question, to be determined by reasons of economy of working and satisfactoriness of results in relation to the kind of world in which the method is being used. Professor Carnap proceeds in Part II to apply statistical tests of satisfactoriness. Suppose an investigator, who takes a sample of size s, and on its basis estimates the frequency of a particular predicate, using a selected value of λ. He makes a long series of such estimates for the same predicate, keeping s and λ the same. An umpire, who knows the actual frequency, tests the investigator's success by finding how widely the various estimates differ from the actual frequency; and for this the mean of the squares of these differences (the mean square error) is the measure he uses, calculating the value of λ which gives the mean square error the minimum value. Professor Carnap shows that this value of λ is always different from 0 except in the case in which all the objects possess the predicate.

He goes on to show that the investigator (who of course does not know the actual frequency of the predicate) can always choose a value more suitable for his estimates than the value $\lambda = 0$, except in the case just mentioned. This can be shown, as he says, with deductive certainty: and he concludes "It seems to me that this result shows a very serious disadvantage of the principle of preferring unbiased estimate-functions and of the straight rule" (p. 79), i.e. of taking $\lambda = 0$.

There is no doubt that what he has now demonstrated is of great theoretical interest for the further development of the subject. But at the present stage, as his own numerical example suggests and as can, I think, be seen from an exploration of possible numerical values, the value of λ resulting from his rules is always so small that the estimate of relative frequency based on it does not differ significantly from that given by the straight estimate: so that the rules have no direct practical importance.

The fruitfulness of his general mode of approach is beautifully illustrated by his discussion in the Appendix of the *Minimax Principle* of A. Wald.

On page 88, in (iv) at the top of the page, e (Gothic letter) should have a dash. In (v) a factor s has been dropped out from the second expression in the numerator, and the same factor has been dropped out from the corresponding expression in the numerator in (vi).

L. J. RUSSELL.

PHILOSOPHY

Recovery of Belief. By C. E. M. Joad. (Faber and Faber. Pp. 248. Price 15s.)

I do not think this book is an unmitigated success, but it is hard to know just what standard to apply to it. Is it intended to convince the really sophisticated intellectual agnostic of the truth of theistic religion, or at least to convince him that there may be something in it worthy of further enquiry? Judged by this standard, I believe it fails; the first chapter on "The Plight of the Intellectual" would not be likely to make such a one feel either that he was in a "plight" or that religion would help him out of it; it might just as well be entitled "the plight of the traditionally religious." I do not find anywhere in the book a discussion of the question why one should bother about religion; nor of the question what can be meant by theological assertions about God, the soul, redemption by Christ, physical resurrection and the like. But these are precisely the questions which the intellectual agnostic begins by asking. The received opinion in intellectual circles is that such assertions are strictly meaningless or else very roundabout and strained ways of speaking about features of sense-experience; or just expressions of emotion. Anyhow when life is so short, why concern oneself with such obscure matters about which there seems to be no prospect of any agreement among the professors of them?

"So long as the philosopher declaimed in the old way either for or against him (sc. the theologian), he was at least being contradicted. Now he was not even taken seriously enough for that. It is an ominous sign when a man's friends no longer contradict him" (Basil Mitchell in *The Socratic,* Blackwell, Oxford). If this book is addressed to people even moderately acquainted with modern philosophy, surely to make no mention whatever of the Verification-principle is a grave defect? Though I suppose no one now maintains that "the meaning of a statement is its verification," yet it would be a great mistake to think of this principle as disposed of; in a modified form it has become part of the current coinage of thought. Are the theologians willing to allow that any conceivable experience whatever should rank as evidence in favour of or against their assertions? If not, such assertions will seem idle to most modern men—not perhaps strictly meaningless, but uninteresting, since if anyone makes a contradictory assertion, there is nothing to be done about it.

A book of this kind ought to take seriously such a statement of the modern empirical attitude as J. Wisdom's "Gods" (in Flew: *Logic and Language*). Now it may well be argued that present empiricism puts an excessively restrictive meaning upon "experience," and ignores the fact that thought has certain immanent criteria of its own in deciding how to formulate experience; but such argument is not to be found in this book.

Such matters are touched in Chapter IV. "That Religion is merely subjective"—a chapter that contains much that is good on the claim of religious experience to be cognitive, although involving feeling. Religious experience can be shared, and therefore must be to some extent communicable. "Because it is felt not to be purely subjective, it demands to be mediated, that is to say, placed in some sort of framework by reason. . . . Religion then, so far as it is an assertion of propositions that claim to be true, is reason's formulation of what man feels and has always felt intuitively about the nature of the universe" (p. 103). But what is the status of these propositions, and have they all the same status? Joad says (p. 99): "The believer may be said to know that at a particular moment in history God became incarnate—though this belief is presumably confined to Christians." Most people would retort that this is an odd sort of knowledge, and Joad does not defend the statement—indeed he seems to contradict it on p. 243. One feels that more is needed on the relation of experience, faith and formulations than we are given.

Again, if the book is addressed to the informed agnostic, surely there should be some reference to Freud's "explanation" of religion. One page only is devoted to modern psychology, and on this no mention of Freud's theory occurs.

For the sophisticated reader the book seems too unsystematic. Surely such a one is aware that there are varieties of religion, among them varieties of Christianity, in the world, each tenaciously held by its own adherents, no one of them at first glance quite obviously superior to the rest. Some effort should be made to relate this fact to the general theistic position taken up, and to the doctrines of the Church of England which Professor Joad himself adopts. Is it not odd to include a chapter in defence of the Church of England *followed by* a "Postscript on Christianity," for which the book, so Joad says, "though it holds a brief, makes no case" (p. 243)? In general, as the chapter-headings show, the book gives an impression of being hastily thrown together.

But, it may be said, such standards ought not to be applied to "an account of some of the reasons which have converted me to the religious view of the universe in its Christian version" (p. 13). And indeed, given an acquaintance with some of the author's other works, it is not impossible to detect the thread upon which these reasons have been strung. It is a polemic against his former friends whose views he advocated in *Counter-Attack from the East,* whose best-known representative is Mr. Aldous Huxley. He is quite justified in taking note of this movement, which Mr. Langmead-Casserly with magnificent arrogance has recently called "The Retreat from Christianity into Religion" and judges to be as dangerous as irreligion. Joad is also quite correct in holding that Mr. Huxley does not attach such importance to the fact of moral evil or to the hope of personal immortality as Joad now attaches to these. But it is in my judgment unfair polemics to apply matter-of-fact logical standards to the "mythology" of one system, while refusing to apply them to a rival system, and this is just what Joad does. Space permits only one example out of many. As a "logical objection," he asks (on p. 170): "If reality is a single universal consciousness, how does it come to be split up into, or get expressed as, a number of individual consciousnesses. In the first place, why should it do so? . . . How, in the second place, *could* it do so?" To this one may retort: These are not logical objections, but rhetorical appeals to the difficulty of thinking how and why something utterly unknown to us could happen; surely there is an *equal* difficulty in understanding *how* and *why* a personal God should have created the world out of nothing? Joad rightly refuses to apply logic here. Such matters are not to be settled by tests of necessity and contradictoriness, but by preference—on balance—for one analogical image rather than another; reasons for such a preference, if any can be made explicit, are subtle and cumulative. Oddly enough, when he does come to explain creation, he uses an image of Shankara's, the founder of the most extreme school of pantheistic monism (p. 222). If anyone really says "God is my toenail" (and the Zen Buddhists say that sort of thing), such a statement ought to be treated in the same way as "Christ ascended into heaven," which Joad says is to be believed because it is impossible (p. 243). But fair and helpful controversy on such matters should lay myth beside myth. Similarly the argument from the survival of Christianity, on which Joad lays great stress, ought to take account of the survival of Islam, and still more of such a pacifist religion as Buddhism.

The real reason for Joad's antagonism to Aldous Huxley is not a point of logic; it is much more important. It is his sense of the cardinal importance of moral struggle, and in consequence his feeling that God ought above all to be an assigner of "moral marks" for moral effort (p. 30); also that God ought

Himself to be *meritorious*, for nothing "can be deserving of worship unless it has merit" (p. 159).

This is essentially Kant's point of view (*minus* Kant's recognition of the "holy will") and it raises the whole problem of the relation between morality and religion—far too big a subject for a review. It must, however, be said that Joad's view is extremely onesided. One must start with the "phenomenological" fact that there are two streams of thought among sincerely religious men, both found within orthodox Christianity. One stream makes the sense of sin and moral struggle central, and regards God primarily as the righteous Judge. But there is certainly another stream which emphasizes that moral evil is a privation, that moral acts imposed on oneself have little value, that a gradual conversion to love of the good is what really matters, and that God sends His rain on the just and the unjust alike. In his account of the mystics (p. 105) Joad should have mentioned their absolute unanimity that evil is in some sense "nothing," "a privation."

Predominance of the former stream of thought in Protestant Christianity may seem to lead to that hatred of enemies and that self-hatred which are both such a feature of our times. Joad, however, is convinced that above all greater emphasis on the wickedness of man is what is needed for the Church to be taken seriously again. I wonder.

He rightly devotes a chapter to re-habilitating belief in a "soul," holding that the so-called mind-body relation must be our model for thinking about transcendence and immanence. His treatment of determinism, though not new, is good. He puts forward a "Pure Ego" theory of "soul" as a normally inaccessible, co-determining factor (with the body) of the "mind," which is a Humean bundle of ideas. He appears to me to shirk the issue whether this soul is really quite unaffected by events that happen to the body, and to refuse to think about Averroes *v.* Aquinas. "The soul is the vehicle of God's immanence. It is that in respect of which we are, if not divine, at least in contact with the divine" (p. 203).

It is not agreeable to criticize anyone who undertakes a task of this difficulty and importance. The book is quite free from the slickness and disingenuousness of much Christian apologetic, modest and apart from some blemishes of composition, pleasant to read. What he writes about environmentalism, science, the ends of life, the inadequacy of behaviourism is well done, and needs doing by someone of Joad's great powers and opportunities. Only, judged by the measure of these, it seems to fall short. C. SUTTON.

Gravity and Grace. By SIMONE WEIL. (Routledge and Kegan Paul. Pp. xxxvii + 160. Price 15s.)

This book confirms the impression I had already formed that much of Simone Weil's writings will be found to have an enduring value after the politico-ecclesiastical dust raised by their publication has died down. These brief aphorisms are evidently a distillation of much bitter experience, they show a distinction of style quite uncommon in writers on these topics, and a remarkable freshness of thought. The lapidary quality of her work does seem to spring from a love of truth, from an urge to formulate something very important to her very exactly. The interest of her work for students of religion, of politics and of modern French culture is now widely acknowledged; I am concerned here only with its merits as philosophy. There is little doubt that she would have so described it; she was after all—among other things—a teacher of philosophy in several girls' high schools, and steeped in the classical philosophers as well as in mathematics and physics.

It is, however, not at all the sort of thing which is currently regarded as philosophy in England. It is the sort of philosophy that makes its task to formulate and communicate aspects of life that slip through the nets of the sciences, which often are barely communicable except by an effort akin to the artist's. The philosopher to whom she bears the most striking resemblance is Nietzsche. Though acquainted with him, she does not bear any special marks of his influence, and the conclusion of her reflections—"leftist" and "near-Catholic"—may seem at first sight very different. But their conception of their task is identical, the way it works itself out in language is strikingly similar, and in fundamentals they are much akin—"necessity" in Simone Weil, for example, plays much the role of "eternal recurrence." She is quite free from the tendency to rhetoric and heavy joviality which occasionally mars Nietzsche; but in compensation she betrays now and then what one is inclined to call feminine whimsicality, especially when she comes to mention Jehovah or classical Rome, her *bêtes noires*, or her favourite Pythagoreans and Egyptians. In her, as I believe in Nietzsche, there is behind the aphoristic mode of composition quite a coherent system of thought; her thought in her more or less finished works shows a high degree of intellectual responsibility. Her notebooks, however, of which *Connaissance Surnaturel* (Paris, Gallimard) is a verbatim reproduction, show that she put down on paper absolutely everything that occurred to her, for though a mystic she was, as we learn from M. Thibon, prodigiously talkative. That book is an absorbing psychological document, but quite other standards ought to be applied to it.

Gravity and Grace is also based on notebook jottings, but selected and arranged by M. Thibon. I doubt whether it is the best book to start with. The main lines of her philosophy are to be found in more readable form in *Waiting on God* (though its subject is mainly religion) and in the latter part of *The Need for Roots* (though its subject is mainly politics). There are, however, excellent things in this book, and it is much better translated than was *The Need for Roots*. M. Thibon in his Introduction succeeds in giving a vivid impression of this lovable but uncomfortable personality at one stage of her life.

The barest facts of her life are given in the prefatory note to *Waiting on God*, and rather more fully in the joint study by MM. Thibon and Perrin (*S. Weil*, Paris. La Colombe) which, however, is somewhat tantalising in its omissions and almost entirely concerned with her attitude to the Church. In brief, she was a child of wealthy and, it seems, worldly Jewish parents; after brilliant success at the University (under Alain) and as a teacher, she made up her mind to share the life of the poor, worked in the Renault works ("La Condition Ouvrière"), fought with the Reds in Spain, had certain mystical experiences that brought her in contact with the Church, worked as an agricultural labourer in the Midi, then at Free French Headquarters, London, where she died at the age of 34, after long ill-health. Would her works be devoid of interest apart from the aura of romance cast by this life? I do not think so.

Now characterize briefly this type of philosophy? One might start by calling it a highly individual amalgam of Plato, Buddhism and pre-Ignatian Christian mysticism. Fundamental is the "experimental ontological proof" (*G.* and *G.*, p. 90) of being "raised up" out of one's ordinary character by attention to certain experiences.[1] These are especially: contact with the radiance and compassion of saintly persons, contact with the beauty of the world, contact with such religious ritual as has "remained pure." Thence

[1] Cf. Robert Barclay: "When I came into the silent assemblies of God's people, I found the evil weakening in me and the good *raised up*."

reflection leads us to acknowledge the occurrence of "implicit love of God" in men; this occurs as something "infinitesimal" within the network of necessity or "gravity" (I think this term is coined to denote the genus of which physical necessity and psychic motivation are species). This "implicit love of God" is fully analysed in *Waiting upon God.*

Simone Weil's theodicy is in extreme contrast to that of Leibnitz, for it emphasizes the contrast between the seemingly infinitesimal factor of Grace and the evil necessity of the world. The world *exists* because it has issued from God; it manifestly falls short of full being; it is created to wean our desires from the things of sense. Through contemplation of the world's brute necessity and especially through "letting it enter our soul" by way of unconsoled affliction, we may become *de-created* and so re-enter God. This is the inner meaning of the Christian images of incarnation and crucifixion.

Of course the contrast is not as simple as that. The contemplative attitude of "extreme attention" (a central concept) discovers unsuspected beauty in brute necessity and in tragic human attachments. And there is a certain limited place for voluntary effort, itself also a queer kind of necessity. Morality is a "violence that we do to ourselves." It should be restricted to clear and inescapable duties. We have to contemplate moral good and evil with an equal eye in order to be drawn towards the Good. Goodness of heart comes not from morality but from Grace.

She faces quite candidly, I think, the special difficulties of this type of philosophy. And one may fairly call hers a *philosophical* mysticism; her "extreme attention" is to intelligible similarities and differences rather than to sensuous imagery. Her attitude to the Catholic Christian fund of wisdom on the one hand and to ecclesiastical claims on the other, and her emphasis on the need to purge Christianity of Judaism seem to me worth pondering. Her conception of philosophy is in line with the Greek view of *Theoria* as a process of conversion towards the divine (*G.* and *G.*, p. 118 ff., abridged):

> Science offers only three kinds of interest: technical applications; a game of chess; a road to God. It will either have to seek a source of inspiration higher than itself or perish.
>
> The use of reason makes things transparent to the mind. We do not, however, see what is transparent. We see that which is opaque through the transparent. . . . The uncomprehended hides the incomprehensible, and should on that account be eliminated.
>
> The world is a text with several meanings. . . . We have to welcome them all, but arrange them vertically, placing them on suitable levels. Thus: chance, destiny, providence.
>
> Intelligence can never penetrate the mystery, but it and it alone can judge of the suitability of the words which express it. For this task it needs to be keener, more discerning, more precise, more exact and more exacting than for any other.

CLAUD SUTTON.

Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge. By KARL MANNHEIM. Edited by Paul Kecskemeti. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1952. Price 25s.)

In his introduction to these essays, Dr. Kecskemeti remarks that Professor Mannheim "never really cut adrift from philosophy." Add to that the fact that the philosophy was German, that Mannheim himself was of Hungarian origin and that his sociology was developed in England and in English, and

you have a mixture which goes far to explain the obscurity and turgidity, which in varying degree mar all Mannheim's writings. Only in his later work did these characteristics begin to yield to greater concreteness of expression, a process which was unhappily cut short by the author's untimely death at the age of 52.

The articles in the present collection were all originally written in German and belong to an early phase of Mannheim's thought; they certainly impose very severe demands upon the reader's ability to cut through Teutonic verbiage to the realities behind. Most of the papers deal with some aspect of "the sociology of knowledge"; though that on *The Nature of Economic Ambition and Its Significance for the Social Education of Man* is concerned with a relatively straightforward analysis of the different conceptions of success favoured by various types of society, and of the adjustment (or maladjustment) of the educational process to the realities of the world for which the young are being educated. Essentially, the common thesis of these essays seems to be that understanding and knowledge are themselves conditioned by the social environment, and that this fact must influence our conception of scientific truth. Cultural phenomena, in the author's view, differ from the data studied by, say, the physicists, because they involve interpretative work, and are necessarily local and temporary: they cannot, therefore, be made the subject of universal generalizations comparable to the laws of the natural sciences. At the same time, Mannheim does not press this doctrine to the point of denying that scientific truth is attainable in the sociological field. He sees the difference as a matter more of method than of the result attained—the sociologist substituting "sympathetic participation" for the physicist's detachment.

What this adds up to in terms of epistemology, philosophers are no doubt better qualified to judge than sociologists. Sociologists, however, are never happy with the notion that philosophic speculation can be conducted in a vacuum. On that issue they will count Professor Mannheim on their side, even if, in these essays, he has hardly succeeded in practising the empirical method which he appears to be preaching. And for the defects of this volume, posthumous publication must bear much of the blame. Had the author lived, it is more than likely, in view of the later trend of his thought, that he would have radically rewritten all these papers before presenting them to an English public.

BARBARA WOOTTON.

The Glorious Presence. By ERNEST E. WOODS. (London: Ryder and Co. 1952. Pp. 248. Price 18s.)

This work is described on its title page as "a study of the Vedānta Philosophy and its relation to modern thought." Its author is an Englishman long domiciled in America, and the work seems primarily intended for the growing number of Americans who, having fallen away from their ancestral churches, find scepticism or materialism psychologically unpalatable, and turn to Asia for a substitute faith, which they discover in a "streamlined" Vedānta.

The book is in four sections, of which the first is an outline of the author's neo-Vedāntic philosophy. Here the axiom "All is one" is elaborated and developed by homely analogies and specious arguments. A relation exists between cat and mouse—therefore cat and mouse are identical. The second section tries to adapt the Hindu system of mental and moral training, loosely known in the West as yoga, to the conditions and needs of an alien civilization. Here the author makes liberal concessions to the ideals of an acquisitive society—thus: "Some say: 'Kill out desire altogether.' No, no, be rational

about desire. We have no reason to kill out desire any more than to kill out thought."

The third section is a translation of the *Dakshiṇāmūrti Stotra*, a short religious poem attributed to the great Hindu theologian Śankara, with a lengthy and discursive commentary by Mr. Wood. The title of the poem is translated quaintly and literally as "Ode to the South-Facing Form," but in the text "the South-Facing Form," actually an epithet of the god Śiva, becomes "The Glorious Presence." But otherwise the translation is accurate, and if the commentary often interprets the text rather freely, the author is perhaps justified by the precedent of Śankara himself.

The last section is a brief review of European philosophy, from Plato onwards, in the light of Hindu thought as interpreted by the author. Plato, Aristotle, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Kant, Fichte, Hegel, and Schopenhauer are weighed in the scales of Vedānta and found wanting, though Schopenhauer almost tips the scale. Emerson is praised, as to all intents and purposes a Vedāntist. Though the author writes of the relation of Vedānta to modern thought he mentions only two twentieth-century philosophers, William James and A. N. Whitehead. Mr. Wood accords high marks to America's most famous philosopher with the startling statement that "Pragmatism is well on the way to Vedānta." Whitehead, who lived many years in America, is described as "standing up like an Everest in these Himalayas." The logical positivists, dialectical materialists, and existentialists, whose systems leave no room whatever for the one reality behind all illusory appearances, are beneath the author's notice. Science, philosophy, literature, and art, all tend to the one truth, which "ancient Aryan thinkers" realized long ago, and which the world is too deluded to learn.

Let us not, however, be unjust to Mr. Wood. He achieves what he set out to do—to provide food for thought for moderately well read men and women, who are desperately in need of faith in a world which denies it to them. To the social historian this book may be of some interest; to the student of Indian thought it is of little use; to the philosopher it is worthless.

A. L. Basham.

The Subtle Knot: Creative Scepticism in Seventeenth-century England. By Margaret L. Wiley. (London: Allen and Unwin. 1952. Pp. 303. 25s.)

Although intended for students of literature, this well-written book deserves a notice here. It has a thesis about the nature of genuine scepticism, with an addendum that this scepticism was at its height in our seventeenth-century men of letters, and that the literary scepticism of the eighteenth century was of a superficial sort, unvirile and infertile. The former was instrumental, the latter terminal.

The opening contention that the genuine scepticism was bodied forth in Greece by Pyrrho and his like may be left unexamined. All that matters is the author's identification of it with what the ordinary Greek meaning of the term suggests—a spirit of untiring inquiry, a process or method that knows no end and therefore cannot abridge and rest itself in any particular doctrine. It stifles no questions, but being a search for answers it is not the mere negation of common views; it denies with hesitation and only provisionally, being distrustful of the finality of its present light, and being rather inclined to *epochē*, suspense of judgment, though not to the point of buying thereby an inhuman neutrality in matters of practical concern. It is the foe not of belief but of dogmatism, whether negative or positive, and whether of unthinking fideism or of intellectual arrogance. It labours in humility and agony, with

the occasional and transitory reward of that gathered serenity which the ancient Sceptics (and the Stoics and Epicureans) called *ataraxia*. In particular, it is the full embracing of complexities, the refusal to simplify problems by ignoring any of the multitudinous and conflicting factors.

This is the sort of scepticism which the author, following the prints of other investigators, finds in some of the outstanding and typical literary minds of the seventeenth century. Most of us are, I suppose, familiar with it in the "metaphysicals," even though its seriousness is sometimes half-concealed under an extravagant love of paradox. Of them Miss Wiley gives a chapter to Donne, for the rest choosing, with a chapter for each, Sir Thomas Browne, Richard Baxter, Jeremy Taylor, and Joseph Glanvill. She seems to me to unfold her powers most in her treatment of Browne. All these men are religious sceptics, all men of strong belief yet obedient to the rational demand for clarification and evidence, and toiling on from partial to less partial truth, never claiming theoretical finality, their faith being that more and more are ever discoverable, and that the whole and certain truth will be, as Browne puts it, "an accessory of our glorification." They used the sceptical instrument to purify and ground convictions that could be lived by, whereas the sceptics of the next century used it either negatively or for a show of intellectual modesty; and they struggled with "the subtle knot" (an expression taken from Donne), whereas the later sceptics either cut it or, in Miss Wiley's words, reproduced it "in tissue-paper rather than in hemp."

A book like this (with similar studies to which the author refers) is useful in helping us to know the attitudes and ideas, philosophical in essence, behind the Cambridge Platonists and Locke, and enables us to make a truer contrast between their century and the so-called Age of Reason. The blunders in the Greek and Latin quotations, the frequent and uniform occurrence of "isosothenia," and some carelessness in French accents, are quite untypical of the level of competence.

T. E. Jessop.

The Place of Hooker in the History of Thought. By Peter Munz. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. Pp. X + 217. Price 18s.)

This book contributes a great deal to the understanding not only of Hooker but also of his complex age. In his century, as in the Middle Ages, the question of the proper relation between Church and State and the deeper ones of the relations between divine and human law and between faith and reason, stand in the foreground of philosophical reflection.

Mr. Munz argues that the attitudes of the political thinkers in and before Hooker's time are closely related to their general metaphysical assumptions. If they follow Augustine in regarding faith as absolutely superior to reason and the State as the consequence of sin, then they will defend the absolute superiority of Church over State. If with Aquinas they consider faith and reason as two complementary modes of cognition and the State as the result not of sin but of God-given human nature, then they will hold that spiritual and secular government are two co-ordinated aspects of any Christian community. Lastly, if they hold the doctrine of double truth or the view of Marsilio of Padua that faith and reason are entirely separate, they are likely to give a great deal more to Caesar than they would do otherwise.

The author shows that these doctrines and the conflict between their defenders cut across the division between Catholics and Protestants. The central point of his book is the thesis that Hooker's position is in the main an unsatisfactory compromise between Aquinas and Marsilio. While Hooker

attacked Puritanism in the spirit of Aquinas (see, for example, Appendix A), he had to accept some elements of Marsilio's theory in order to justify the Tudor monarchs as Christian rulers.

To the student who is forced to rush through the history of political thought many of the sixteenth-century ideas must seem lifeless. By considering them against their general historical and metaphysical background Mr. Munz shows why they were real problems of real people. This, it seems to me, is the chief merit of his well-written book. S. KÖRNER.

The Interpretation of Plato's Republic. By N. R. MURPHY. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951. Pp. viii + 247. Price 18s.)

This is an interesting book, which would repay reading by any serious student of Plato. It is learned and scholarly, and contains many acute and judicious comments. And yet taken as a whole the effect is curiously disappointing. Certainly, no one should read it with the expectation that it is going to make Plato easier to understand. Indeed, the probable reaction of most readers would be to say that they had never realized that the *Republic* was so difficult. It may sometimes, of course, be a good thing to point out difficulties that were not apparent at first sight. But I cannot help thinking that Mr. Murphy makes it unnecessarily hard, and that some of his difficulties are not very real ones.

As a study of the *Republic* the book seems to me to fall between two stools. It is not a continuous commentary on the book. The order of treatment is not always the same, and some important points are hardly discussed at all. The political side of the argument, in particular, is very inadequately treated, which is a pity, as what Mr. Murphy does have to say on this contains many very sound remarks. On the other hand, it is not successful as a general study designed to bring out the main features of Plato's ideas. The argument is close and detailed, sometimes rather repetitive, and worries so much over particular points that it is hard to see the wood for the trees. What clearly interests Mr. Murphy most of all is the metaphysical theory and the associated theory of knowledge. And here I find his argument particularly difficult to follow. So far as I have understood it, I should disagree with a good many of his conclusions.

In general, the impression that the book gives—I hope that it is not an unfair one—is that the author is less interested in the attempt to put himself at Plato's own point of view than in the analysis of the argument as it stands from the point of view of contemporary modes of thought. I feel pretty certain that the amount of attention given to different sides of the subject is quite out of proportion to what Plato himself intended. There sometimes seems to be a tendency to criticize Plato for not having arrived at certain modern ideas. Thus, he is apparently blamed (e.g. on p. 91) for not appreciating the distinction, so often made nowadays, between the right and the good. But would any Greek have done so? And is it self-evident that he is wrong? What is more important is the almost complete absence of any discussion of the historical background of ideas and institutions in which Plato wrote. This is a serious lack in itself, and I think sometimes leads the exposition astray. Thus Mr. Murphy, like some other contemporary writers, raises what seem to me largely unreal difficulties about the meaning of Thrasymachus' point of view. Yet if this is looked at in its historical context there is no great difficulty in understanding it. Again, there is no serious consideration given to the question of what a dialogue is, what its limitations are and what Plato's

intentions were in writing in that form. Thus, he is apparently criticized (p. 181) for not having given us a systematic exposition of what he means by the Idea of the Good. Yet, it is evident, both from his practice and his own statements in the Letters, that he would not have thought it possible or desirable to attempt this in a written dialogue. It may, indeed, well have been an ideal of explanation which he did not think that he himself had yet attained. Taking all these points together, then, I feel obliged to say that, interesting though the book is, it is not the satisfactory exposition of the argument of the *Republic* for which there is still a crying need. G. C. FIELD.

Medieval Logic—An Outline of its Development from 1250–*c.* 1400, by PHILOTHEUS BOEHNER, O.F.M., of The Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure, New York. (Manchester University Press, 1952. Pp. xvii + 130. Price 12s. 6d. net.)

Lord Russell once said of the pure mathematician (1) that he never knows what he is talking about, and (2) that nothing that he ever says is true. Albert of Saxony towards the close of the fourteenth century in his *Perutilis Logica* and Walter Burleigh in a treatise bearing this highly significant title, *De Puritate Artis Logicae*, written in the earlier part of the same century, adopt a similar view in regard to the function of the pure logician. Truth-relations are doubtless implied in the definition given by Albert of Saxony of the term "antecedent," as the author suggests in the paraphrase which he gives of the definition on p. 71; but Albert does not use the word "truth": he speaks only of the conditions under which the antecedent will signify what it purports to signify. In Latin the definition runs:

> *Ista propositio dicitur antecedens ad aliam, quae sic se habet ad eam, quod impossibile est qualitercumque est significabile per eam, stante impositione terminorum, sic esse, quin, qualitercumque alia significat, sic sit.*
>
> A proposition is said to be the antecedent of another proposition when it is so related to it that it is impossible for what *can* be signified, no matter how, by the first proposition to be in point of fact signified by it (*sic esse*), unless—given that the terms retain their meaning—what the other signifies, no matter how, is in point of fact, signified by it (*sic sit*).

Given two propositions, p and q, it is impossible for the relation "if p, then q" to hold between them unless, when q is actually significant, p is also actually significant.

Nouns, verbs, and their derivates, adjectives and adverbs, were called by Scholastics "categorematic words" or "categories." They all have what Peter of Spain calls a *suppositio naturalis*, i.e., they refer to objects, and, when used, the logician supposes that we know to what objects they *can* refer. Words of their very nature are such that they can be used in order to denote objects, i.e., they are significant; and hence, when used, they purport to denote at least one of the objects signified. From the standpoint of logic this suffices. To ask what objects are signified by this or that word is, from the standpoint of the pure logician, irrelevant.

On the other hand, to examine the various ways in which words are used in order to denote objects is relevant to logic. Hence the need to discuss the significance of what Scholastics called "syncategorematic words," i.e., words such as "every," "some," "no," "not," "and," "or," "if-then," which have significance only when used in conjunction with categorematic words already having significance. These words are discussed in Part II, Section I, of

Medieval Logic under the heading "The Syncategoremata as Logical Constants." Since they form "the real skeleton of logical discourse" they were at first classed together, but "as the scholastics developed the formal character of logic," they "gradually came to be presented in their proper place in the general scheme."

How this came about is shown in the next two sections of Part II, which is by far the most important and most interesting part of Fr. Boehner's work. In Section II, which is entitled "The Theory of Suppositio," the distinctions drawn by Peter of Spain, William Ockham, and Walter Burleigh between the different ways in which syncategorematic words may be used in conjunction with categorematic words in order to denote objects are discussed in considerable detail. They correspond to the use of what are now called "quantifiers." In Section III, which is entitled "The Theory of Consequences," the author expounds the theory of implication as it was developed by Ockham and Albert of Saxony, and shows how this theory came to be regarded as a general theory of which the syllogism is but a particular case. Burleigh's theory of consequences is omitted because the author hopes soon to publish the tract, *De Puritate Artis Logicae*; but to Albert of Saxony he devotes two appendices, one dealing with his *Sophismata* and the other giving, both in English and in Latin, the rules of supposition which appear in his *Perutilis Logica*.

There can be no question but that Fr. Boehner has done what he set out to do, namely to show that the modern logic of Russell, Whitehead, Carnap, and Quine is by no means so revolutionary as it is commonly supposed to be. In embryo it is contained in the writings of Scholastics of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, long since forgotten and by neo-Scholastics ignored. To confirm this Fr. Boehner has expressed the rules given by Ockham, Albert of Saxony and others in the symbolism used by modern logicians.

The long lists of logical treatises given in Part III make dull reading, and the technical terms used will, I fear, prove unintelligible to most readers. The author's English, too, is often awkward and sometimes inexact. What he means to say is not always what he actually says. But Fr. Boehner's work will none the less prove to be of great interest to modern logicians, and will be studied, one hopes, by any neo-Scholastic who should be contemplating the writing of a new textbook.

LESLIE J. WALKER, S.J.

The Imagination of Reason: Two Philosophical Essays. By ERIC UNGER, Dr. Phil. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1952. Pp. vii + 134. Price 12s. 6d.)

In a passage in this unusual book the late Dr. Eric Unger stated that "to philosophize is a general faculty of the human mind—like understanding music. It is not in the first place a faculty acquired through study, although it can be studied too—like music. The study and profession of philosophy can just as well promote as kill the faculty." This passage is characteristic. It reveals some of the weaknesses of Dr. Unger's English—for example, for "general faculty" he should presumably have written "special ability"; but it also brings out his main thesis that philosophy is an activity of imagination, controlled by reason and closely analogous to aesthetic activity and appreciation.

In his first essay Unger argued for a philosophical study of group relations as essential to ethics. In the second, he discussed philosophical method, stressing the importance of imagination.

Both these essays will repay careful study; but they will certainly require it,

for they are often obscure. Those who disapprove of attempts to reinstate metaphysics are unlikely to make the necessary effort.

D. J. McCracken.

The March Toward Matter: Descensus Averno. By John McPartland. (New York: Philosophical Library. 1952. Pp. 80. Price $2.75.)

This little book attacks materialism from the Roman Catholic and Thomist standpoint. The author, however, is no mere pamphleteer. He believes that there is continuity between the attitudes of academic philosophers, with which he is well acquainted, and the contemporary world situation—for example, between their hostility to the speculative employment of the intellect and the external military threats of countries whose regimes have an ideological basis in materialism. Mr. McPartland tends to look eastwards for the worst examples of materialism. It may be suggested that he could find equally bad ones nearer home.

Mr. McPartland argues with sincerity, piety and learning. His book is a challenge to all spokesmen of modernity in philosophy; and those who do not ignore such challenges should find it interesting and stimulating—even when, like myself, they cannot "march" with the author. D. J. McCracken.

Books also received:

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GUSTAV E. MUELLER. *Dialectic: A Way Into and Within Philosophy*. New York: Bookman Associates. 1953. Pp. 234. $4.00.

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KARL HEIM. *Christian Faith and Natural Science*. London: S.C.M. Press. 1953. Pp. 252. 21s.

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CONTENTS

		PAGE
I.	ON HAVING IN MIND. Professor J. N. Findlay	291
II.	LINGUISTIC PHILOSOPHY AND PERCEPTION. Margaret Macdonald	311
III.	BERKELEY AND THE EXTERNAL WORLD. J. A. Brunton, M.A.	325
IV.	EXISTENTIALISM AND METAPHYSICS. Philip Leon, M.A.	342
V.	DISCUSSIONS:	
	(1) Justice	348
	(2) The Nature of a Moral Duty	353
VI.	PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY: German Philosophy	355
VII.	NEW BOOKS	359
VIII.	CORRESPONDENCE	382
IX.	INSTITUTE NOTES AND NOTICES	384

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